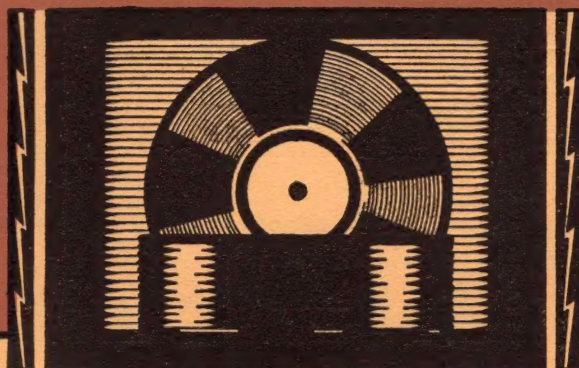


The
OCTOBER 1937
25 cents per copy
AMERICAN
MUSIC LOVER



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EDITED BY PETER HUGH REED

THE FRIENDS OF RECORDED MUSIC

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The records issued by this society can be procured through all music stores. Membership in the society costs \$2.75 a year, and includes a subscription to the magazine. It permits the member to purchase his records at \$1.75 either direct from the society or through his own dealer, instead of \$2.00 which is the price of the records to non-members. Postage will be charged on all orders under \$10.00.

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If you have friends who you think would be interested in the recordings or in **The American Music Lover**, please send us their names so that we can forward a circular or a sample copy of the magazine.

The American Music Lover

A MUSICAL CONNOISSEUR'S MAGAZINE

OCTOBER

Volume III, No. 6

1937

TO WIDEN THE CIRCLE

BECAUSE the subscription list of a specialty magazine maintains its growth partly through its friends, we are inclosing this month a slip to help widen the circle of our readers.

If you have enjoyed *The American Music Lover* and have been guided by its opinions, you undoubtedly have friends who would be similarly benefited by it. Therefore we invite you to send us the names of those friends so that we can send them a specimen copy of the magazine.

In the three years of its existence *The American Music Lover* has attained a recognized position of authority in its own sphere, and has commanded respect from the musical world. There was a time, not so long ago, when recorded music did not receive the respect due it in the musical world. Only a few magazines paid any attention to it, while no newspapers at all, reviewed its progress. Today, however, the status of recorded music has changed; newspapers all over the country now give weekly space to its consideration, and more and more magazines are doing likewise.

There is only one magazine, however, that writes exclusively and exhaustively about recorded music — *The American Music Lover*. This magazine does not attempt to compete with the musical review columns of a newspaper in speed of disseminating news or reviews — but the newspapers, in turn, cannot compete with it in completeness or scope, in its comparison of existent material, or in the depth of perspective it gives to its subject matter. It is this fact that establishes the basis of the magazine's appeal to the discriminating music lover and record buyer.

The American Music Lover aims to make itself indispensable to all interested in recorded music in the home or elsewhere; and to this purpose

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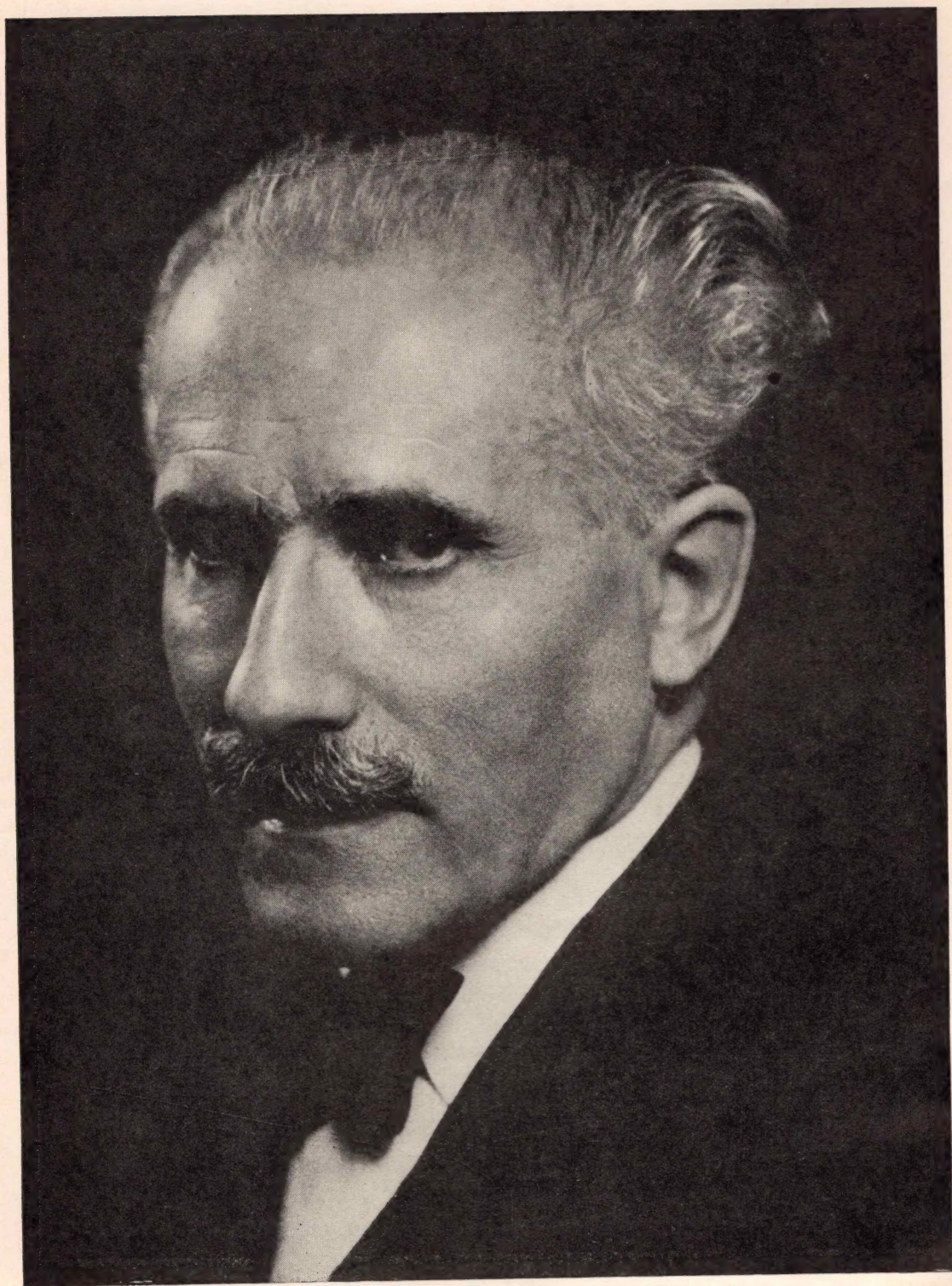
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Toscanini, whose return to America promises exciting things
to record enthusiasts.

Toscanini's Radio Concerts

To Begin On Christmas Night

THE National Broadcasting Company announces the first concert under the direction of Arturo Toscanini, beginning Christmas Night, December 25th.

The NBC Symphony Orchestra concerts will be broadcast over the coast-to-coast Red Network of the National Broadcasting Company for one and one-half hours each Saturday night from 9:00 to 10:30 p. m., EST. They will also be sent by short-wave to music lovers of Europe, South America and the rest of the world.

Before the first of the Toscanini concerts, the NBC Symphony Orchestra, which has been assembled from the finest available musicians in order to make it one of the world's best symphony orchestras, will be heard in two other series of Saturday night concerts, each to be directed by a conductor of international fame.

On Saturday night, November 13th, the evening of the debut of the new NBC Symphony Orchestra, and at the two succeeding concerts, the orchestra will be directed by Pierre Monteux, brilliant French conductor, considered the best in his native land. Following Monteux, Artur Rodzinski, celebrated leader of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, will wield the baton on the three Saturday — December 4th, 11th and 18th — immediately preceding Toscanini's opening concert. At the conclusion of the Toscanini series there will be another series under the direction of Rodzinski.

In assembling its new symphony orchestra, the National Broadcasting Company announces, it has for several months spared no time, effort or expense to bring together a symphonic organization worthy to take the same high place among the orchestras of the world that Toscanini long has occupied among conductors.

It will be the first full-size full-time major orchestra to be maintained by an Ameri-

can broadcasting organization. All members are being engaged on contracts of from 40 to 52 weeks.

Composed of the finest available instrumentalists and soloists, many of its members are "first chair men"—the designation in musical circles of principal players of the various sections of the orchestra—and also members of prominent chamber groups such as string quartets and so on.

The players have come to the new NBC Symphony Orchestra from such famous musical organizations as the symphony orchestras of Philadelphia, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Cincinnati, Minneapolis, Paris, Madrid, Brussels, Budapest; and famous chamber music groups as the Kreiner, the London and the Musical Art String Quartets.

Selection of the personnel of the new NBC Symphony Orchestra was carried out in accordance with a criterion never before used in assembling a major symphonic aggregation. Most of the players in each section of the orchestra are instrumentalists with ability and experience qualifying them to fill the first chair of the section or to play solos.

Each of the principal players is a soloist with established reputation as a virtuoso and with extensive orchestral experience in American and European symphonic organizations.

In selecting the players, the National Broadcasting Company kept in mind the need to fulfill the unusually exacting conditions of radio, which transmits faithfully the most delicate nuances of orchestral music. Standards for a major radio orchestra, it was assumed, were higher than those for an ordinary orchestra.

The violin soloist and concertmaster of the NBC Symphony Orchestra will be Mischa Mischakoff, formerly concertmaster

of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He will have as assistants Jacques Gasselin, formerly of the French Symphony Orchestra of Paris; Henri Nosco, who has been soloist with such outstanding European orchestras as the Padeloup of Paris under Rene-Baton and Chevillard; and Remo Bolognini, formerly with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra under Toscanini.

Among the notable musicians in the new orchestra are: Edwin Bachman, leading second violinist, formerly of the New York Symphony and lately teacher at the Curtis Institute; Oswaldo Mazzucchi, first cellist; George Torke, first bass, both long associated with NBC-Symphony; John Wummer, first flutist, formerly with Detroit Symphony; Robert Bloom, first oboist, formerly with Philadelphia Orchestra; Augustin Duques, long associated with NBC-Symphony; William Polisi, first bassoonist; Albert Stagliano, first horn; Bernard Baker, first trumpet; Gerhard Warms, first trombonist; Karl Glassman, tympanist; David Grupp, percussion; and Edward Bito and Laura Newell, harpists.

Toscanini, in returning to America about December 15, comes back to the land where he has had personal triumphs as great as any in the annals of his art. It was during his seven years of association with the orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, from 1908 to 1915, that he rose from the rank of fine conductors to the pinnacle of individual supremacy among them.

In 1920 Toscanini returned to La Scala in Milan where, in his earlier years, his great genius had matured. Then after appearances with great orchestras in various parts of the world, he devoted most of his time to his consistently brilliant concerts in America with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra.

Last year Toscanini left America amid a great outpouring of devotion and enthusiasm from his vast army of admirers. He was thought to be lost to America until, last winter, he consented to return to the United States to conduct ten radio concerts for NBC for which he will receive \$40,000 net.

Dr. Artur Rodzinski, born in Dalmatia of Polish parents, is among the most brilliant of the younger school of conductors. After acclaim from audiences in Lwow and Warsaw, he came to America as assistant conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra. He was conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic

from 1929 until 1933 when he became conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra.

Pierre Monteux, who has risen to rank of first conductor of France, has had an unusually successful career in concert and opera in Paris, London, Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, San Francisco and Boston. He was for a number of years the conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Overtones

New Society Issues

THE ninth volume of The Beethoven Sonata Society has been issued in England. It contains the *E flat Sonata, Opus 7*, and the *G major Sonata, Opus 31, No. 2*, played, of course, by Artur Schnabel. The notes with this set are from the pen of Eric Blom, who has contributed many valuable booklets to society issues.

English critics have not been kind to this new volume, and Schnabel has been subjected to some criticism, which may or may not be justified. We have not heard the set as yet, but hope to comment on it in the near future.

* * * *

The fifth and last volume of The Bach Society has also been issued in England. This will undoubtedly be forthcoming in this country in the near future. It is to be hoped that Victor will find it possible to release the earlier volumes of this splendid venture also.

The fifth volume contains *Preludes and Fugues* Nos. 20 to 24, from Volume 2 of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, and the *English Suite No. 2 in A minor*. The former is played, of course, by Edwin Fischer on the piano, while the latter is played by Wanda Landowska on the harpsichord. There are six records in the set.

* * * *

Perfect Lieder Recordings

Herbert Janssen, the Scandinavian baritone, has been busy in the recording studios in England making a series of lieder recordings. These new recordings have been praised by several English correspondents, who have

(Continued on Page 212)

ALBERT ROUSSEL

And His Contemporaries

By PETER HUGH REED

ON August 23 of this year in Royan, France, the distinguished French composer, Albert Charles Paul Roussel passed away in his sixty-eighth year. Recognized as one of the most accomplished craftsman of his times, Roussel was a composer who grew with his era and related himself to his age in a unique manner. From his fiftieth year onward, Roussel showed himself more and more in sympathy with modernism and, at the same time that he maintained and asserted his own individuality, he pursued a path analogous to that followed by the younger insurgents of his period.

Born in Tourcoing, near Lille, Roussel carried out a boyhood ambition to be a sailor, entering the Brest Naval School in 1887. Later, as an ensign on a French cruiser and again as a private individual, he made voyages to the Far East, which provided inspiration for much of his early music. Devoting his spare time at sea to musical studies, he subsequently decided upon a musical career and in the middle nineties entered the Schola Cantorum, where he became one of the most brilliant pupils of Vincent d'Indy.

His works include two operas, two concertos, three symphonies, a symphonic poem in three parts, two ballets and various chamber, choral and orchestral compositions as well as some songs.

The following essay is a discussion of the unique manner in which Roussel related himself to his times. Appended to it is a survey of his most important music on records.

IT is conceded generally that a contemporary artist by right of birth enters into the inheritance of the best that has been created before him. For the creation of art is, by nature, basically an evolutionary one. Naturally its development, as we now know it, has not been founded upon mere imitation; for genius is never content to mirror, and no art is acclaimed that betrays labored simulation. As H. W. Hadow, the English musicologist, has said, "erudition may imitate the work of Genius, but Genius alone can develop it."

It is quite logical and proper that composers coming after Bach, Beethoven and Brahms, and also Wagner and Debussy, should show some influences from these masters. For it would seem almost impossible for a composer who stands out from the crowd to ignore completely certain fundamental developments which these creators perfected and intensified. If the initial impulse that impels a person towards a given art is strong and vital, and his ensuing absorption of the principles of that art is subsequently all-embracing, very likely his

creative work will quickly outgrow any derivative vein which at first it betrays. Such an artist as Vincent d'Indy, for example, has proved this. The marked influence of Wagner, in d'Indy's earliest compositions, in his later work becomes metamorphosed through the distillation of this influence in his own inner consciousness. No composer with a vital or enterprising attitude towards his art is going to be contented with accumulating laboriously the character and aspect of a given genius who has preceded him, no matter how great that genius is.

It would seem wholly logical for a contemporary artist to avail himself of the best that has been produced in his own times; that is, if he has truly assimilated music's developments in whole or in part. Contemporary examples as well as previous legacies belong to all men, once an artist has given his art to the world. The stimulation and inspiration they provide become part of the evolutionary growth of art. They are the well-springs of the imagination, the incentive that ignites the smouldering fires of creation in other artists.

When an artist simulates the style of his contemporaries, he is treading on newly ploughed ground; and even though he justifies the adoption of an idiom, he nevertheless frequently lays himself open to derogatory criticism. People are prone to overstress the fact that the influence of a certain contemporary style is traceable in his work. They forget or ignore the fact that Mozart and Beethoven were influenced in their day by Haydn, and more recently, Richard Strauss by Wagner, and so on. Influences are not limited. If yesterday's art inspires the creator of today, there is no reason why the art of today should not also inspire. If one can be influenced by the three B's of previous times, then why not by the three S's of today — Richard Strauss, Stravinsky and Schoenberg? The predilections of an artist are not by necessity revealed in his work, because the artist redistills these things within himself. The sources of his inspiration may be obvious or not, yet if the crucible of his genius fuses them into a new form, what matter the source of his material?

It has been said of Roussel that his music of recent years betrays the influence of certain contemporaries, such as Stravinsky, Schoenberg and others. It has also been stated that his earlier music, that written prior to and around his fiftieth birthday, shows the influence of d'Indy, Debussy, "Le Groupe des Six," and César Franck. Admitting that certain effects derived from these composers are traceable in his art, his own individuality was nevertheless sufficiently vital to establish him as a significant contemporary composer during his lifetime. His absorption of certain forms of contemporary expression in no way curtailed the integrity or the originality of his music; Roussel was no imitator.

Roussel's musical growth was an assured one, and although he did not establish as sharply defined a style as certain outstanding composers of the 19th century, he did develop a musical speech essentially his own. From his earliest compositions he attested his undeniable individuality.

Roussel established himself in relation to his time by following and affirming the youthful movements of his day. It might be interesting to speculate about the development of Roussel's musical genius had he been born in a more placid and less progressive era than our own. But this would necessitate a turning-back and a denial of certain facts which are, because of the music he created, irrefutable. His art undoubtedly would still

have been distinctive, poetic and colorful, scrupulous and cultured, for he was a born poet and painter. It would not, however, be as satisfying as it is. For the fertility of his music, which is neither compelling nor spontaneous, would not have had the modern harmonic vesture to establish the appeal it has today.

Fundamentally, Roussel lacked the truly creative impetus. As I have noted, he was a born poet and painter, and as such was, therefore, expressing himself in a less graphic art. As the poet and the painter, he felt and transcribed musical prismaticism first and foremost, in the manner of a painter who applies color without the guiding lines of a preliminary drawing, yet who nonetheless owns an uncanny linear assurance. In fact his craftsmanship is one of the best features of his art. For the lines in his work are definite ones, yet the fastidious manner in which they are conceived and executed circumscribes their inventive spontaneity. I would say that they were conceived along with the tonal construction; in other words, his counterpoint was conceived not independently of, but in conjunction with, his harmony.

Roussel manifested an unusually independent personality. When in 1896, at the age of twenty-seven, he placed himself under d'Indy's instruction at the Schola Cantorum, he did so evidently with mental reserve; for, as Edward Burlingame Hill has pointed out, he partook of and assimilated d'Indy's counsels in a manner which reacted only slightly on his choice of forms and his musical speech. Thus in his formative years, we find a temperamental predilection toward his later radicalism. Yet the metamorphosis that took place in 1920, after the composer had entered his fifties, was more complete than any could possibly have predicted at that time. Undoubtedly it was more absolute and revolutionary than he ever dreamed it might be. But the music of such radicals as Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Bartok and the "Six" had appeared in the meantime, and Roussel had been swayed by it. And so, having indulged in nature-painting in music for practically twenty years, in the approved manner of the so-called modern French musical movement prior to the World War, he suddenly at fifty swerved to a direction being followed by the younger insurgents of his day, and thereby established himself, we might say, as a musical Ponce de Leon. But in so doing, he did not allow his new music to betray any servile imitation, for the influences which prompted his alteration of style were

unquestionably considered in the sense of new values to be absorbed into his own personality.

The reason for Roussel's change may be found in the fact that he *was* essentially the tone painter, and as such open to the influence of new tonal colorings. As an artist, he was from the beginning of his career progressive; his highly individual imagination, as we have already noted, early freed him from the restraint of academicism. True, there are reminders of the methods of other composers in his works, but they are no more than that. He may have been influenced by an idiom, yet the results he attained were completely his own. As Hill has said, the influence of any other composer "has always been fertilized by his own personal predilections." Hence, the originality of his music cannot be refuted.

As a painter in tones, Roussel could not fail to recognize the potentialities in the extended range of the new harmonic and contrapuntal developments that came with the musical progress of the 20th century; for here undeniably were many new tints, new and brighter hues, sharper contrasts and more striking high-lights. It is to his credit that, in adopting the new formulas, he never permitted himself to lose sight of the essential lines of his works; which probably explains as much as anything why he adopted polytonality and declined to recognize atonality.

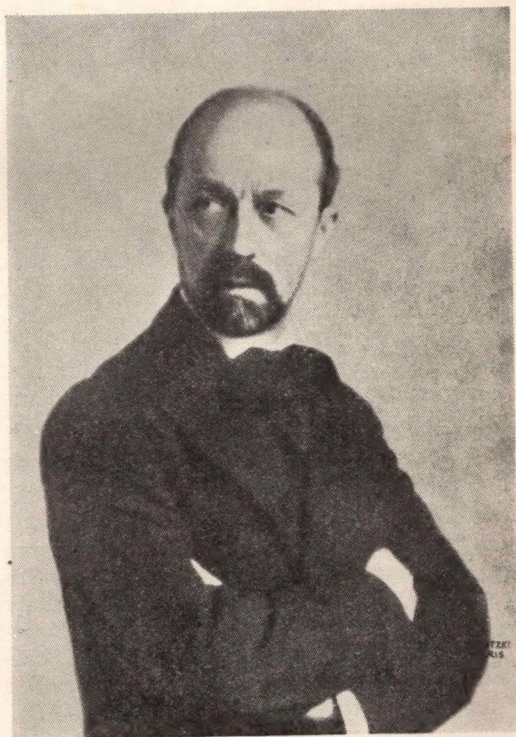
"Polytonal effects, when two or more keys are heard at the same time," he once stated, "are, under circumstances of clear thinking and genuine inspiration, wholly natural and logical and artistic, if properly applied. But I do not consider these musical media properly applied if they destroy the sensation of key. When the key of a composition is thoroughly established the counterpoint may well bring together and cause to clash two or more keys. I feel that if the sensation of a fundamental key or tonality is not present the composer has failed. Atonality I cannot feel or believe in, as it represents the relinquishment of tonality..."

Thus we see that Roussel was willing to adopt new formulas, but unwilling to destroy the true basis of his art, its academic foundation. His dependence on that foundation is further emphasized by his usage of large classical forms, like the sonata, and smaller ones, like the sicilienne, the sarabande, the bourrée and the gigue, in his later works.

The Music of Roussel on Records

There is only one work on records which represents Roussel's genius adequately, and that is his *Symphony No. 3 in G minor*, Opus 42, the work he wrote for the fiftieth anniversary of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, 1930. His *Symphony in B flat* and his three symphonic poems, *Evocations*, which have been acclaimed as his finest works, are as yet unrecorded.

Perhaps his best work on discs is the orchestral suite drawn from his ballet *The Feast of the Spider* (*Le Festin d'Aragnée*)



ALBERT ROUSSEL

dating from 1912. Here his extraordinary craftsmanship is saliently set forth, his imaginative versatility strikingly illustrated. Although this music is said to have been composed hastily, it does not convey that impression. The scenario of the ballet by Gilbert de Voisins, based on the *Souvenirs entomologiques* of Henri Fabre, seems to have intrigued Roussel's imagination. Edward Burlingame Hill, in his valuable book *Modern French Music*, says that "Roussel has been singularly successful in devising music for this microscopic drama. Using a miniature orchestra, he has yet found the means to illustrate the action, characterize its per-

sonages with delicate and pungent humor, and yet rise to its tense moments . . . Its ingenuity does not descend to unbecoming subtlety, nor does it once overstep its stylistic boundaries." No greater endorsement for this music need be given than the statement that Mr. Toscanini has chosen to play it frequently for more than twenty years.

The orchestral excerpts, arranged from the ballet by Roussel, include the following: *Prelude*, suggesting the garden on a summer afternoon; *The Entrance of the Ants*, who explore the garden and discover a rose petal which they carry away with difficulty; *The Dance of the Butterfly*, which ends with her caught in the spider's web where she dies after a brief struggle; *The Hatching of the Moth*; *Dance of the Moth*; *Funeral March of the Moth*, in which all the insects join after the death of the spider. The closing bars of the music illustrate the descent of night on the deserted garden.

There are two versions of this suite on records, one conducted by the late Walther Straram (Columbia discs 67952, 67953D), and one conducted by the composer with a spoken autograph (Pathe X8829-31). Of these, I prefer the Straram set, since the performance there is more resilient and the recording clearer.

The *Suite in F*, Victor discs Nos. 11152-53 (withdrawn), is a work dating from 1926. The composer stated, when he wrote this work, that he had no literary program in mind, but was writing a suite in accordance with classical forms. It is elaborately scored, however, for modern orchestra: piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 3 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trombones, bass tuba, kettledrums, side drum, bass drum, cymbals, tambourine, triangle, xylophone, tam-tam, celesta and the usual strings. Thus we note, and the modern harmonic texture of the score further bears this out, the *Suite* is a case of new wine being poured in old bottles.

The *Prelude* is a lively, discursive piece, of uncomplicated invention, somewhat Bachian in its linear structure, with piquant, modern harmonies and effectively contrasted tonal coloring cleverly drawn out of its modern instrumentation. The *Sarabande* has long lines and a plaintive quality. Here the harmonies are less biting, richer and more subtle. The *Gigue*, which ends the *Suite*, is full of zest and pungent humor. Here again the music is unfettered in its invention.

The odd side of this recording is taken up with an excerpt from Roussel's opera, *La Naissance de la Lyre*—an effective ballet piece, *Danse des Nymphs*.

Roussel's *Third Symphony*, played by the Lamoureux Orchestra of Paris, direction of Albert Wolf (Brunswick-Polydor set No. 3), is an interesting and imposing work, combining modern technique with traditional form. Here, we find the spirit of a thoroughly modern composer, "whose approach to his art is primarily that of the melodist and contrapuntist." The form of this symphony follows the principles set forth by Franck and further developed by d'Indy, in that a single motive is utilized as an important part of all four movements. This motive, of five notes, is one "of arresting melodic contour." It is strikingly proclaimed at the height of the first movement, and is used as the main theme of the adagio, or second movement.

As I noted in reviewing this work recently, the rhythmic energy of the first movement is especially striking. Its dissonance is strong and compelling, and it has the quality of inevitability that never leaves one in doubt as to where the music is going. Roussel's extraordinary craftsmanship is set forth in its arresting climax, and again in the adagio, which is fugal in construction. The third movement, which I find less imposing, was designated in conversation by the composer as a sort of valse-scherzo. The brilliant and dark-hued final movement brings us, in a songful passage for the strings, a further expansion of the central theme of the work. This is perhaps the most compelling section of the work but not necessarily the greatest. It is in the first movement, in sonata form, and in the second, a double fugue, where the most original reaction of a master mind upon the forms is found. And not only the genius of Roussel is evinced in these sections but also his striking individuality.

Flute Players, or *Joueurs de flute*, Op. 27, is a group of four pieces in which Roussel "attempts to throw some light upon as many periods in the history of mankind," not in a pretentious manner, as that phrase would seem to imply, but in a simple and lyric form and by the use of an old, old instrument—the flute. There are four flute players represented, Pan, Tityre, Krishna and M. de la Péjaudie. In a recording (Columbia disc 1790D), Marcel Moyse, the French flutist, plays three of these charming little epi-

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CULTURE ON THE AIR

By NEVILLE d'ESTERRE

(Although this article is written from the British point of view, we feel that its conclusions are also applicable to culture in America. — THE EDITOR.)

"WE are the Music Makers." In other words, we, the kind of people who habitually read such publications as this, and occasionally write for them, are part of that microcosm which is known as the World of Culture. Humility rather than arrogance has evoked this confession — as will appear.

Said the great Huxley (not Julian or Aldous, but their grandfather): "We possess in literary or artistic culture a never-failing source of pleasures, which are neither withered by age, nor staled by custom, nor embittered in the recollection by the pangs of self-reproach." In those words he expressed the *raison d'être* of culture; for pleasure, in the wide sense of the term, must be one-half of life, if life is to mean more to us than to a squid or a salamander. It is the great error under which so many modern people labor, and suffer for their pains, that happiness (of which pleasure is the visible token) is a sort of manufactured commodity, which you cannot possess until you have bought it — that nothing, in fact, is happiness that has not been so marketed; and the discontent that besets such people, when their efforts to buy pleasure over the counter fail to bring them the happiness they need, is one of the root causes of the perils that threaten civilization at the present time. We recognize the error of their ways; and yet, such is the force of modern publicity, this hunger of theirs, which they do not know how to gratify, is affecting all of us, and causing us to ask ourselves: "What is it that we are after? Does all this culture of ours mean anything at all?" We are in danger of landing ourselves in that state of despair, where we see no hope for humanity, and envy the condition of the squid and the salamander. To idealize a good time is to realize a bad one.

My domicile is in a country where culture, like the wealth which sustains it, is gathered too much into one particular centre; and in that centre — the vast "man-heap" known as London — it is my fate to spend most of my time. Close to my dwelling place are streets of drab buildings, occupied mainly by people

who have to work for their living and have received no more education than the State has been able to give them for nothing. And, if I walk on a summer evening along one of those streets, as I often do, I shall hear, monotonously repeated from one window after another, the same vocalist shouting the same song, or the same pianist thumping out the same sonata, or the same orchestra muddling its way through the same overture, or the same trick organist executing the same melodious stunts. If I look into those windows to observe how these gems of sound affect those on whom they are showered, I shall see men reading newspapers, women occupied with all manner of domestic industry; and the street outside is clamorous with a hundred noises, ranging from grinding motor-gears to barking dogs, and the cries of street hawkers, and dominated by the shrill voices of the citizens of the future. And then, if on my return home I open one of the papers dedicated to the interests of broadcasting, I shall read that this musical entertainment, of which the fragments have reached my ears through the surrounding clamor, is the means whereby culture, with all its rewards, is being distributed to the masses at less than half the annual cost per head of a stall at Covent Garden (for one evening only) in the opera season.

Well, I fear I lack the touching faith of some of my neighbors in the truth-value of the printed word. I suppose I have had too much to do with the production of printed words to regard them, in themselves, with any degree of reverence. But, what counts for more, I have been in music, more or less, for the past thirty years — in music, in the society of musicians. Art-music, to give it its rightful designation, is for me the supreme form of culture; and I say that with reason, and not merely because of the enjoyment I derive from it. It is enough, maybe, to point to the directness of its appeal. But the more I know of it, and the more it enters into my life, the more firmly does the conviction embed itself in me, that the way to the understanding of it is not through mere passive

reception. I do not say that you have to be an active practitioner in order to get there. After all, most of us have no time to be active practitioners. But I do say that you have to give yourself to it, if you wish to know it, and, in the act of giving yourself, exclude all else from your thoughts. If it is to be understood — and, lacking this, what value has it? What value has any abstraction? — it must be allowed to have intimate and exclusive possession of your mind; and, when you attempt to mix it with industry, or eating, or talk, this essential condition is wanting.

I have no quarrel at all with the stuff that broadcasting puts over. Some of it is good, some is bad, and most is betwixt and between. But the listener can always cut out what he does not want to hear. You cannot choose your program, as you can with a gramophone; but then you cannot choose the programs given at concerts and recitals, but have to accept what the organizers have decided to give you. A few evenings ago I heard Beethoven's *Pastoral* here in this house; and the fine B. B. C. orchestra was playing with Toscanini in command. The reception was particularly good, and I could have wished for nothing better. It did not disturb me at all that the alternative program was some footling musical comedy (I had a whiff of it while tuning in), for I had matters arranged so that nothing but the Toscanini performance reached me. But then, I was giving my attention to it in the proper spirit, and not attempting to take it in with half my mind, while the other half was occupied with an evening paper.

The symphonies of Beethoven are not all of equal stature; and I think the *Eroica* is a bigger thing altogether than the *Pastoral*.

The *Eroica* is the kind of music I want to be quite alone with; and I can be quite alone with it in a concert hall where a thousand others are moved by the same desire. The last time I heard it, Weingartner was conducting; but when the sound of it reached me I was not in the "presence" — I was bringing my car into a public garage, and the strains of the *marcia funèbre* were issuing from a big Rolls-Royce, at which a chauffeur was busily at work with sponge and leather. And while the chauffeur rubbed the car, he whistled one of those popular tunes which are here today and gone tomorrow. I

do not condemn the popular tune, but merely place the fact on record that the effect of the *marcia funèbre* on the chauffeur was to make him whistle the popular tune. But what I really heard was, of course, not the *marcia funèbre* at all, but a sort of crazy suggestion of it echoing through a veritable tangle of other noises — the whistling of the chauffeur, the swish of water from the hose-pipe, the clatter of machinery, the voices of several people talking loudly. Exactly what was being implanted in that place, through the medium of sound, at that particular moment is more than I can say; but, whatever it was, it was not artistic culture in any recognizable form.

When a person has received the blessings of a liberal education, and has responded in some measure to that incentive, that person will hardly fail to recognize the force of genius when he meets it. Now, as Balzac said: "The masses understand even more slowly the creations of genius than the Kings used to." The masses, indeed, can hardly be expected to recognize such a thing as genius. Why should they? The rabbit does not recognize the existence of the golden eagle, until the king of birds swoops down and carries him off in his talons. And, even then, the recognition is hardly in the nature of scientific understanding. One of the chief difficulties that confronts the propagandist of artistic culture is that the masses are not in the least discontented with their moral and intellectual outlook; on the contrary, they are far more pleased with themselves than we are. And that is why the broadcasting of high culture, in the form of art-music, or otherwise, fails of its purpose. That which is presented to the masses as a soul-stimulant of the noblest order, comes to earth in their habitations as a mere agreeable noise, which adds zest to the rhythmic manipulation of a flat-iron or a floor-mop, and causes hope to spring anew in the breast of the student of "probable starters" and the odds at which they are likely to run. The masterpieces of audible art are shot up into the stratosphere to descend like rain upon the expectant earth; and like rain they refresh not only the lilies and the roses, but also the ground-elder and the stinging nettle.

Culture is desired only by those who have it already. In that proposition lies the solution of the so-called problem of broadcasting.

The Complete Discography of Bix Beiderbecke

Part I

By WARREN W. SCHOLL

TO the collector of hot records the name Bix Beiderbecke, the greatest white cornetist of all time, carries the same significance that say Caruso, Battistini or Scotti would have for the connoisseur of good operatic discs. For every person who wants to know when Caruso made his early Fonotopia recordings there is another equally enthusiastic collector who would like to know if Bix was responsible for the hot cornet chorus in Trumbauer's version of "*Baby Won't You Please Come Home*," and when he recorded with Whiteman, etc. etc.

Unfortunately the collector of Bix items is handicapped by the fact that much of Beiderbeck's time was spent playing in groups whose true identity was obscured by that of a "name" (Whiteman-Goldkette) or some ridiculous nom-de-plume appearing on the finished record label. It would be impossible to point out within the limits of a single article all recordings which featured the great Bix, so for this month I shall limit my material to discussion of his Okeh appearances and a few brief comments on these discs.

To start at the beginning, back in 1927 Bix was playing in Jean Goldkette's fine orchestra alongside of such celebrities of Frankie Trumbauer, Don Murray, Chauncey Morehouse, Joe Venuti and Eddie Lang. The group officially recorded for the Victor company but since the powers-that-be restricted Goldkette almost entirely to pop tunes, very few hot arrangements were made for this company. Luckily for us an all-star recording unit was formed from the Goldkette orchestra to work for the Okeh Phonograph Company.

Frankie Trumbauer directed this combination and under his supervision many hot numbers were recorded. Approximate line-up of the band was as follows: Bix Beiderbecke (cornet); Trumbauer, "Doe" Rycker and Don Murray (saxes); Bill Rank (trombone);

Chauncey Morehouse (traps); Adrian Rolini (bass sax); Irving Riskin (piano); Eddie Lang (guitar); and Joe Venuti (violin). First coupling to be released by the Trumbauer-Bix group was the immortal "*Singin' the Blues*" and "*Clarinet Marmalade*" (Okeh 40772).

Bix's special chorus in "*Singin' the Blues*" still is a model for other cornetists to live up to. Many musicians who felt that this interpretation could not be improved upon have lifted the Bix chorus bodily from the record. On Victor disc 22721 the entire arrangement has been transcribed note for



Beiderbecke and Trumbauer
Summer, 1929

note by Bill Challis for Fletcher Henderson's band. The opening chorus by Trumbauer, of course, today remains his most original contribution to hot jazz.

♫ "*Clarinet Marmalade*," makes an exciting coupling to "*Singin' the Blues*" with Bix leading the whole band and taking solos with typical abandon. This number furnishes quite a contrast to its companionpiece and thus allows the student to appreciate the tremendous power and individuality of Bix's hot style.

♫ "*Riverboat Shuffle*" and ♫ "*Ostrich Walk*" (40822). Of all the numbers Bix made with the Trumbauer unit these two feature him in his most inspired solos. We are treated to a full 32 bar chorus in "*Riverboat*" in addition to numerous hot breaks occurring throughout the entire arrangement. The driving force behind Bix's chorus here is enough to lift one right out of his chair.

♫ "*Ostrich Walk*" is arranged very capably by Bill Challis and it shows off the band in some clever ensemble playing. Again Bix's cornet dominates most of the performance. This is another record one can use to prove that ten years ago the pioneer arrangers and hot stars were already one up on the present aggregation of "swingsters."

Next in line we have ♫ "*I'm Comin' Virginia*" and ♫ "*Way Down Yonder in New Orleans*" (40843). Tempo in each is considerably slower than that of the previous issues and Trumbauer is more conspicuous in some swell sax solos. Bix is allotted a full chorus on each set and here he plays in a more leisurely drawling style quite suited to the occasion.

At this point some of the Trumbauer records became more commercial in character. Many were blotched with horrible vocal refrains but since Bix always managed to take short solos on each they can't very well be overlooked. First such concoction was "*Blue River*" and "*Cradle in Caroline*" (40879). "*Blue River*" features Bix in the verse and free-for-all closing half chorus. Same title was waxed by the regular Goldkette orchestra for Victor in a much inferior version (Vic. 20981) boasting a mere 8 bar solo by Trumbauer in the final chorus.

"*Cradle in Caroline*" has little to recommend it, outside of Trumbauer's work in the sax ensemble. Two short breaks in the verse mark Bix's only contribution here.

The Trumbauer recording of "*Trumbo-logy*" (40871) is strictly a show-off piece

written by Tram to show us that he has an amazing technical command of his instrument. As novelty stuff it will do, but a little of this kind of thing goes a long way. On the reverse we have "*For No Reason at All in C*" played by BIX-TRAM-EDDIE and their three piece band. This is one of those rare instances where Bix plays piano instead of cornet. Since Trumbauer is the only member of this original combination who is with us today such a record assumes greater historic significance than it would otherwise. At the end of the disc Bix switches to cornet for a short break in the section where each musician improvises individually for a closing coda.

♫ "*Three Blind Mice*" and ♫ "*Krazy Kat*" (40903). Three months ago the Hot Record Society released two different versions of "*Three Blind Mice*" originally recorded by Bix, Trumbauer and gang for the Perfect Company under the pseudonym CHICAGO LOOPERS. This Okeh arrangement is still a third version played by the same group slightly augmented. Bill Challis is responsible for the present orchestration which places Bix very much in the limelight. Also noteworthy are the successive solos by Eddie Lang and Adrian Rollini following Bix's feature chorus.

♫ "*Krazy Kat*" is a very unusual jazz tone-poem adhering to no previous standard. Bix's work here is of a rambling nature similar to that of "*I'm Comin' Virginia*." For sheer individuality this curious number stands out more than any other single item in the Trumbauer repertoire.

A second example of Bix's piano playing is to be observed in his own piano solo "*In a Mist*" (40916). Although he wrote four compositions for the piano (the others being "*In the Dark*," "*Candlelights*" and "*Flashes*") there exists this single recording where he plays his own music. Outside of Jess Stacey's sympathetic treatment of "*In the Dark*" and "*Flashes*" on a foreign release (Parlophone R2233), no other piano solos of Bix's composition are available yet.

Coupled with this piano solo is ♫ "*Wringin' and Twistin'*" played by the TRAM-BIX-EDDIE three piece band. Routine here is similar to that of "*For No Reason At All in C*," this being the more successful of the two titles. Although the group may not "swing" in the present sense of the word (and automatically would be called "corny" by the modern generation of swing critics) it does possess a charm of its own.

To show his respect for the Original Dixieland jazz band, Bix organized a similar combination and together with this gang recorded twelve selections which were released under the title "*Bix and his Gang*" or "*New Orleans Lucky Seven*." Best results were obtained with the first personnel employed, line-up of which included Adrian Rollini (bass sax), Don Murray (clarinet), Howdy Quicksell (banjo), Frank Signorell (piano), Chauncey Morehouse (drums), and Bill Rank (trombone). These titles were "Sorry" and "Since My Best Gal Turned Me Down" (Okeh 41001); "At the Jazz Band Ball" and "Jazz Me Blues" (Okeh 40923), and "Goose Pimples" and "Royal Garden Blues" (released under the pseudonym—Okeh 8544).

The remaining three doubles by Bix and his gang were definitely inferior to the earlier titles because of a nearly complete change in personnel, but on the strength of Bix's appearance they are still worth having. Titles included "Thou Swell" and "Somebody Stole My Gal" (Okeh 41030); "Ol' Man River" and "Wa Da Da" (Okeh 41088); "Louisiana" and "Rhythm King" (Okeh 41173).

Returning to the Trumbauer releases next in order comes "*Baltimore*" and "*Humpty Dumpty*" (Okeh 40926). First side is virtually a jam session inasmuch as no written arrangement was used. Bix, Eddie Lang, Joe Venuti, Adrian Rollini and Tram all contribute worthy hot solos on this one. "*Humpty Dumpty*" is one of those eccentric modern creations similar to "*Krazy Kat*" though not quite as interesting.

Issued about this time were three sadly commercial numbers played by commercial bands featuring Bix and Trumbauer. Collectors, however, should be interested in knowing about them because to date their existence is virtually unknown. Under the baton of Benny Meroff, Bix and Tram recorded "*I'm Wondering Who*" and "*Just One Hour of Love*" (Okeh 40912), two thoroughly bad arrangements, excepting a bright chorus, featuring the hot solos of Bix and Tram. The third tune was one called "*Sugar*" (Okeh 40938), released under the questionable name of Russell Gray and his orchestra. A short bit by Bix is the only possible excuse for owning this record.

"Crying all Day" and "A Good Man is Hard to Find" (Okeh 40966) should be classed as first rate Trumbauer recordings. First title is obviously modelled after "*Singin' the Blues*" and it features a grand

16 bar chorus by Bix. Reverse is equally palatable despite the scarcity of solos by Bix.

In "*Mississippi Mud*" (Okeh 40979) Bix dominates the show again. In addition to carrying the band through the opening chorus he takes a full chorus following the vocal refrain. Incidentally the vocalist here was the best rhythm singer ever to appear on a Trumbauer record—being none other than Bing Crosby, known then only as composer of "*Mississippi Mud*" and member of the famous original Whiteman rhythm boys. "There'll Come a Time," the reverse follows routine arrangement and can be dismissed without further comment.

"Lila and "Our Bungalow of Dreams" (Okeh 41019) furnish two excellent samples of hot arrangements of otherwise popular songs. Only hint of commercialism to be found occurs in the vocal refrains which are as bad as usual for a Trumbauer record. Bix puts across some fine solos in each and Trumbauer plays a typical chorus in the latter title.

"My Pet" and "Borneo" (Okeh 41039) — Bix leads mostly in "My Pet" but in "Borneo" he and Tram play one of those "chase" choruses that were so popular with the latter. As you probably know, a "chase" chorus is one where Bix starts the chorus with a short phrase which is picked up in turn by Trumbauer. The two then carry on musical conversation in this fashion throughout the chorus, each playing phrases suggested by the other and vice versa.

"Jubilee" (Okeh 41044) belongs to a different class of music from that usually associated with Trumbauer or Bix. It is pleasantly nostalgic music, typical of American composer Willard Robison who is famous for this sort of thing.

"Bless You Sister" and "Dusky Stevedore" (Okeh 41100) is not a grade "A" Trumbauer double because both sides feature a disproportionate amount of poor vocalizing. Best feature of either side is Bix's lilting first chorus on "Bless You Sister".

"Sentimental Baby" and "High Up on a Hilltop" (Okeh 41128) — Were it not for the tremendously hot solo (Bix using derby mute in this case) occurring in the final chorus of "Sentimental Baby" we could pass this one by immediately.

"Love Affairs" and "Take Your Tomorrow" (Okeh 41145) — Both selections were arranged by the capable hot pianist, Lennie Hayton. Were it not for the absence of string

bass (here replaced by bass sax) it would be perfectly simple to palm off the first side as a 1937 release. Bix's cornet may be heard copiously on this number. "*Take Your Tomorrow*" features a notable sax chorus by Tram and a brief spot by Bix. An excess of dated patter spoils this otherwise original arrangement.

"*Futuristic Rhythm*" and "*Raisin' the Roof*" (Okeh 41209) — The first side introduces Tram in the role of feature vocalist. Much more exciting is Bix's inspired hot chorus taking place after the vocal refrain. Joe Venuti and Eddie Lang make a welcome appearance in "*Raisin' the Roof*" and Trumbauer takes the spotlight in second chorus. Bix leads the band in opening and closing choruses, taking an 8 bar solo during the middle of the first one.

"*Ma Cherie*" and "*Louise*" (Okeh 41231) — Just two pleasant semi-hot arrangements of popular tunes are these titles. Tram dominates most of the show, but on "*Ma Cherie*" Bix gets off a couple of hot breaks.

Last of the Trumbauer recordings on which Bix is featured are "*Baby Won't You Please Come Home?*" and "*I Like That*" (41286), two of the best numbers to be released since the early 1928 masterpieces such as "*Riverboat Shuffle*" and "*I'm Comin' Virginia*." Bix employs a derby for mute in his 24-bar solo in "*I Like That*." Also to be observed in this number is Lennie Hayton's excellent arrangement.

An unusual feature of "*Baby Won't You Please Come Home?*" is that both Bix and Andy Secrest take hot cornet choruses. As a result of sitting next to Bix for nearly a year in the Whiteman band, Secrest emulated the Bix style so well that he caused many people to mistake him for Bix on several famous Whiteman and Trumbauer recordings. On this particular record Secrest plays the hot solo during the verse with his instrument open, whereas Bix takes the feature chorus using a derby over the end of his cornet.

The remaining Okeh Trumbauer records were all made with Andy Secrest playing in Bix's place because the latter was too ill to appear regularly with any orchestra. Simultaneously Secrest took over Bix's position as feature hot cornetist in the Whiteman orchestra. Next month I shall complete my Bix discography by dealing with Bix's appearances with Whiteman, Goldkette and Carmichael (Victor and Columbia), and his very first recorded appearances with the Wolverines (Gennett—1925).

ALBERT ROUSSEL AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

(Continued from Page 204)

sodes with admirable artistry. He is assisted at the piano by Joseph Benvenuti. As Mr. Miller said in a review of this disc, it is unfortunate that the ground plan of the little suite is upset in this recording by the omission of the third piece (Krishna) and the reversal of the chronology of the second and the fourth. Pan's effusion is the longest and most elaborate of the pieces. It is followed by that of M. de la Péjaudie, representing modern times. Roussel's wit is evinced by his usage of a modern figure who is not an actual personage, but the hero of a novel by Henri de Regnier, entitled *La Pecheresse*. Mr. Miller says his music "is a short and not too serious serenade." Tityre's air, which follows, returns us to mythological times. It "represents the lover protesting the absence of the beloved."

Besides the above works, there are a half-dozen songs of Roussel's on records, the most interesting of which are his *Jazz in the Night* (French Columbia LFX-109) and *Light* (French Columbia D15129), both sung by Claire Croiza, one of the finest French singers now living.

At one time, there was a recording of Roussel's *Sicilienne* from the *Suite for Piano*, Opus 14, played by L. Lévy, but this has been withdrawn from the catalog.



NEW BOOKS

A Phonophile's Collection of Symphonies — A Life of Bach for Young People

FAMOUS INDIVIDUAL SYMPHONIES IN SCORE. Edited and devised by Albert E. Wier. Harcourt, Brace and Company. Price \$5.00 P. P. — \$7.50 Cloth.

EIGHT symphonies are included here: Berlioz's "*Fantastic*" Symphony, Bruckner's *Seventh Symphony*, Dvorak's "*New World*," Franck's *D Minor Symphony*, Goldmark's "*Rustic Wedding*" Symphony, Mendelssohn's "*Italian*" Symphony, Rachmaninoff's *Second Symphony*, and Schumann's "*Spring*" Symphony.

The wide endorsement and success of Albert E. Wier's arrow system of following music in those symphonic scores already published has prompted the issue of this volume. This is a veritable phonophile's collection of symphonies, for all the works here are recorded and all except Goldmark's "*Rustic Wedding*" Symphony have been widely acclaimed recorded items.

For those who are unfamiliar with Mr. Wier's arrow system it might be well to state that it is a simple and ingeniously one whereby a listener can become easily acquainted with the themes, their relative position in the score, etc., at sight. There can be no denying that some knowledge of the thematic material of a symphony helps us in our enjoyment of it. And there can be no denying that apprehending music by eye as well as by ear helps us toward a more comprehensive appreciation. Mr. Wier's system simplifies the following of the musical line so thoroughly that one does not have to digest the whole score, so to speak, to apprehend its melodic content, for the arrows lead from one instrumental line to another as the theme is shifted in the scoring. There is no better way, in our estimation, whereby the listener may learn to identify the formal divisions of a symphony, movement by movement, than this system of arrow markings which Mr. Wier has devised.

Books on the symphony, its form and its structure are fairly numerous. But reading about themes, their construction, and how

they lead into one another, is not always helpful in establishing their true relationship to each other. Nor is apportioning off records with a ruler to ascertain the character of various themes individually. With Mr. Wier's arrow-marked score, however, and a set of records of a given work, not only is the identity of each theme immediately ascertained but the function of it and other motives that make up the general scheme of each movement is also made apparent.

Each of the eight symphonies included in this volume is prefaced by brief notes which are informative and interesting. As in his previous volumes the editor has included recommendations of recordings. In all cases the preferable recording has been given first. In only one instance has Mr. Wier neglected to mention a worthy recording of a work, and that is in the case of Meyrowitz and the Paris Symphony Orchestra's version of Berlioz's *Fantastic Symphony*. However, the omission is not a serious one, since the best performance of this work on records still remains Monteux's.

The arrangement is the same as in previous volumes: four pages of the miniature score are included here on each page, and the whole is printed clearly on a fine stock of dull-coated paper which makes it easy to read.

For those who have been doubtful about score reading, this volume and its companions will solve a problem. About the only thing necessary to derive pleasure and benefit from Mr. Wier's arrow-marked scores is the ability to follow a single line of music. With constant usage it is not unlikely that the listener will find himself an adept score reader in a short time. And since a little study along these lines helps increase one's enjoyment of the music, we heartily endorse scores like these as starting points.

—The Editor

SEBASTIAN BACH—*The Boy from Thuringia*, by Opal Wheeler and Sybil Deucher. Illustrated by Mary Greenwalt. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York City. Price \$2.00.

HERE is an excellent present for the child who is learning music of any kind. The authors have already contributed books on Mozart and Haydn of similar character, which have been widely praised and endorsed by educators and recommended by the American Library Association.

This book will not only tell the child the story of Bach's childhood, it will also convey to him the unusual nature of his career, and further, will help arouse his interest in the master's music. It is written to appeal to children between the ages of eight and fifteen. The story takes us through the childhood of Bach, and then presents a picture of him as a father. The illustrations, which are profuse, will intrigue a child's imagination and help him to visualize things as they were in Bach's day. The book also contains a number of musical examples from various works of Bach, simply arranged, so that the child who is studying music can easily perform them.

The style of the book is not stilted or condescending and for this reason it should be most useful. Such a book has the possibility of sowing a seed, which may well bear fruit of permanent and lasting value.

—The Editor.

EDITORIAL

(Continued from Page 197)

welcomes its readers' opinions, by which it has profited upon more than one occasion. The growth and tenor of our correspondence would seem to indicate that we have maintained full independence and given clear-cut and unbiased interpretations of the various subjects within our province.

The editors at this time would like to thank the many readers who have written in for their interest and continued good will. As our correspondence is extensive, we ask the indulgence of those who write in when we do not reply immediately.

OVERTONES

(Continued from Page 200)

heard the test pressings, as among the finest lieder discs ever made. A first release containing Schumann's *Widmung* and *Die Lotusblume* (HM-DA1569) obtained the following review in *The Gramophone*, "As the arts of singing and recording stand at present, it should be difficult to find more nearly perfect *Lieder* recordings than these."

* * * *

Walter Gieseking has recorded Beethoven's *First Piano Concerto* with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra, direction H. Rosbaud, who conducted the orchestra for Gieseking's performance of Mozart's *E flat Concerto*, K. 271.

* * * *

English Decca have recorded Dvorak's *Symphonic Variations*, Opus 78 in a performance by Sir Henry Wood and the Queen's Hall Orchestra.

Sir Henry has also made the three *Spanish Dances* of Ganados for Decca.

* * * *

Nancy Evans, the English contralto who sang the role of Dido in Decca's complete recording of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, has made recordings of Brahms' *Zigeunerlieder*, Opus 103. The eight songs take three sides of two twelve inch records; on the fourth face Miss Evans sings Brahms' *An die Nachtigall*, Opus 46, No. 4.

* * * *

Kreisler and the Philadelphia Orchestra, direction Eugene Ormandy, have recorded the violinist's transcription of the first movement from Paganini's *Violin Concerto in D major*. This is apparently the same music that Menuhin gave us in Victor set M-230. Why the first movement has been chosen for transcription by Kreisler, we cannot say. However, this we do know: the celebrated violinist-composer Wilhemj also made a transcription of this movement and played it frequently in public as an independent composition. Lazlo Szentgyörgyi, the Hungarian violinist, has recorded the Wilhemj transcription with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra on Victor's German associates' discs Nos. EH 418-19. The duplication by Kreisler hardly seems necessary, but then his transcription may be a better one.

Record Collectors' Corner

By JULIAN MORTON MOSES

ONE of the greatest delights in astounding misbelievers with outstanding records of many years past comes from the unapproachable excellence of their recording, insofar as vocal fidelity is concerned at any rate. I was reminded of this when reviewing the Raisa and Björling releases last month. The first, an extremely faithful job for this day, was still clouded in many spots and far more careful of the orchestra's nuances than the singer's. As for the second, it was one of those affairs where you were tempted to exclaim on many occasions "Bravi, Engineers!" For contrast, I turned to two Odeon De Luxe records just thirty years old. On them, a galaxy of famous names including Landouzy, Dubois, Affre, Freville, Rigaux and others joined with chorus and orchestra to render the septet from *L'Africaine* (56132/48) and the sextet from *William Tell* (56186/94). Aside from the extreme improbability that such material would now be trusted to break down the sales resistance of an ignorant public, it can safely be said that the current type of vocal recording would in no way compare with the crystal-like clarity and balance of tone, slightly favoring, as it should, the singers, that these antique discs achieved.

Yet the vast majority of those who buy rather than collect records consistently eschew anything that is not electric. So much is this the case that a shop has just opened with the purpose of exchanging old for new. While we should, perhaps, be grateful for this opportunity to acquire much that is worthless to these misguided souls and yet invaluable to us, I cannot help but pity their narrow perspective and wish that a campaign might be inaugurated to enlarge it. When I initiated my series of radio broadcasts last fall, I met the same scepticism, even on the part of professional musicians. It was records, of course, not I which finally convinced them. Now that a major company has felt the need of thus convincing its public, we may feel sure that others will soon follow suit and that much which, for one rea-

son or another, has remained unavailable to us will once more see the light of day.

* * * *

Speaking of the daylight, a Zonophone record has reached it by no less a person than "Little Warrior" Fabbri. At first, the only important artist to be discovered on this rare label was "Little Bull" Parvis. Lately, quite a number of Tetrizzini's have turned up, followed by several Mantellis. We have seen on domestic shores a few Blanchards, spelled thusly, but only one Caruso (pardon us, that was in Brooklyn). Who, we wonder, will be the first to show us a Plancon, or Calvé or Salvini? Then we might be moved to permit another person's name to enroach upon these exclusive pages (exclusive of readers, some say).

Of all major companies, information seems scarcest about Zonophone. In fact, we have never seen a catalogue of its releases though we know, for instance, that Mantelli's efforts did not begin and end with a "Good-Bye". Quite to the contrary, she ran the whole gamut of musical experiences from contralto parts like her fine Cenerentola to light soubrettes like Zerlina aided by Parvis as the Don. She made quite a few Italian canzoni including a particularly good *Dopo* and even extended her art northward to include the *Der Asra* of Rubinstein. Throughout, she reveals a sumptuous voice and a masterful technique coupled with considerable intelligence and versatility. She will do very nicely as a representation of Zonophone's importance until someone unearths one of the above-mentioned rarities or better yet, Ternina's long suspected *Vissi d'arte* on this label.

* * * *

And speaking of labels, I should like to clear up a matter which confuses many who read page five of my *Record Collector's Guide* without having considerable experience in handling the various issues of Victor patents labels. The simplest explanation is

that new labels were not introduced on the very date of the issue but were rather spread over a long period beginning with a month or two later. Thus, the Grand Prize label was still very much in use until November, 1908 and, in certain cases (Farrar's *Styrienne* from *Mignon* No. 88152 among others) even up to May 1909, though many earlier releases appeared first with the August 1908 patents label. The determining factor, I believe, was the date of recording, since the labels were often printed on that occasion though the record was not listed till much later.

There is likewise much overlapping between the other types of patents labels (those with descriptive labels on the back of the record were introduced in April 1911) and between these and the no-patents label. This later type, it should be noted, is best distinguished by the absence of patents numbers at the bottom of the label. The price mark at the side was carried over into the earliest Victrola labels (where one or two patent numbers and dates were resumed) and is therefore not a conclusive guide. Finally, the no-patents label is the last to make the distinction between Victor Records (up to \$1.50) and Victrola Records (\$2 and above.)

* * * *

Rambling (as seems to be our habit) through early German lists which we had compiled ages ago, we discovered the following interesting Olitzka item:

June 1906: *Morganhymne* (Henschel)
G&T 43766.

August 1906: *Ich liebe dich* (Grieg)
G&T 43776.

These reminded us that everything we said about Mantelli above goes doubly for this great contralto. Her domestic Columbia records, issued from January 1912 to August 1913, did not come within the scope of the present edition of *The Record Collector's Guide* but are none the less awe-inspiring. Surely, here was a woman who could sing anything from Orfeo to Samson including excursions to every other country and period and sound as if each selection she tackled was written especially for her. Strange as it seems, a greater percentage of exceptional talent seems present in the contralto range than elsewhere in the human voice.

SHOULD MUSIC BE CUT?

TO cut, or not to cut, that is an old question where music is concerned. The latest to defend the cutting of music is none other than Deems Taylor, the composer.

Mr. Taylor sees the exacting measurements of radio as an aid in the service of good music to the listening public. Some might say that Mr. Taylor, as a radio official, is succumbing to the limitations of radio. Others may agree with his contentions.

Columbia's consultant on music, as commentator for Andre Kostelanetz' new Wednesday night CBS series, from 9:00 to 9:30 P. M., EST, has found that great music may be "digested" by discarding excessive elaborations and at the same time including all the essential themes "without any distortion of the composers' intentions."

This is the plan of the Kostelanetz series, which aims in this fashion to give the most of the best music within a given space of time.

"The music won't be cut in the usual sense," says Taylor, "because we won't attempt or pretend to give any of the works of famous composers in their entirety."

"What we hope to do is to give our musical compressions with enough taste and honesty so as not to offend those familiar with the music and yet to give an honest impression of the selections to those who are not familiar with them."

In the same way — according to those who oppose cuts — one could presumably get "an honest impression" of a fine racing horse from just its torso. In any event, it would seem that Mr. Taylor's idea falls in with the current trend toward "digests" in the literary world.

Both Taylor and Kostelanetz are doing each week what Taylor calls "an extensive job of building up the program around the soloists, making each program appropriate to the personality and nationality of the soloist."

"Above all," says Taylor, "we stick to the idea that the soloists must do the type of music which they are used to doing on the operatic or concert stage."

Record Notes and Reviews

Reviewers in This Issue: NATHAN BRODER, A. P. DE WEESE,

PAUL GIRARD, PETER HUGH REED

ORCHESTRA

BRAHMS: *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*, Opus 56a; played by the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, direction Arturo Toscanini. Victor set, M-355, two discs, price \$4.50.

HAYDN'S theme, inscribed *Corale St. Antonii*, upon which Brahms based these variations, comes from an unpublished *Divertimento* for wind instruments. Brahms wrote this work and its companion, Opus 56b (the same variations in an arrangement for two pianos) in the year 1873. It is one of the most imaginative masterpieces of its kind ever written. Since the work ante-dates the *First Symphony* by several years, the suggestion has been extended that Brahms wrote it as a preface to that monumental work. Be that as it may, while it is quite possible that Brahms was working out a symphonic style here, what he accomplished is a decidedly beautiful monument which can and should be appreciated entirely for itself and not thought of in connection with any of his symphonies.

One does not need to have read pretty phrases describing these variations to enjoy the work. As Prof. Tovey says, "the listener need not try to recognize Haydn's melody throughout Brahms' variations: he will have no difficulty in doing so when Brahms wishes; and an elaborate analysis would show something like a nervous system of melodic connections." Tovey is right when he says that the best way to enjoy this and similar works "is to become familiar with the whole work." Perhaps analytic guides in the manner of a musical map, such as Philip Hale has written or Tovey himself (in the second volume of his *Essays in Musical Analysis*), help, but in the long run one will not need to refer to them. In writing in the variation form no composer of Brahms' calibre continues to throw the theme at us throughout his composition. There is no

more need of a composer, as Tovey says, "to keep on reminding us of the original melodic surface of the theme, than there is for birds of paradise to remind us of crows because the anatomist knows that that is what they are."

No one shapes this music like Toscanini; he realizes its graciousness, its genial spaciousness, its resourcefulness, its dramatic glow, in a truly consummate manner. The recording, like all of Toscanini's, covers a wide range of dynamics. In this it does justice to his extraordinary conductorial genius. Because of this an expander is not necessary in reproduction.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

MAHLER: *Das Lied von der Erde* (*Song of the Earth*) — A Symphony for tenor, contralto and orchestra; performed by Charles Kullman, Kerstin Thorborg and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Bruno Walter. Columbia set No. 300. seven discs, price \$14.00.

MAHLER has always caused controversy among critics and music lovers alike. His emotional intensity and dramatic eloquence too often exceeded their bounds, he strained them to the uttermost, and in only few works did he rise to preeminent heights or achieve the universal note of unified power. There are in his music peaks of grandeur, moments of exalted beauty, sections of dramatic splendor, but there is also much that is blatant and inconsequential. "One has found through his symphonies," wrote the late Philip Hale, "restlessness that at times became hysterical; reminders of Wagner, Berlioz, and Strauss; melodies in folk-song vein, often naive, at times beautiful, but introduced as at random and quickly thrown aside . . . diffuseness, prolixity that becomes boresome; an unwillingness to bring speech to an end; seldom genuine power or eloquence."

Toscanini... Heifetz...



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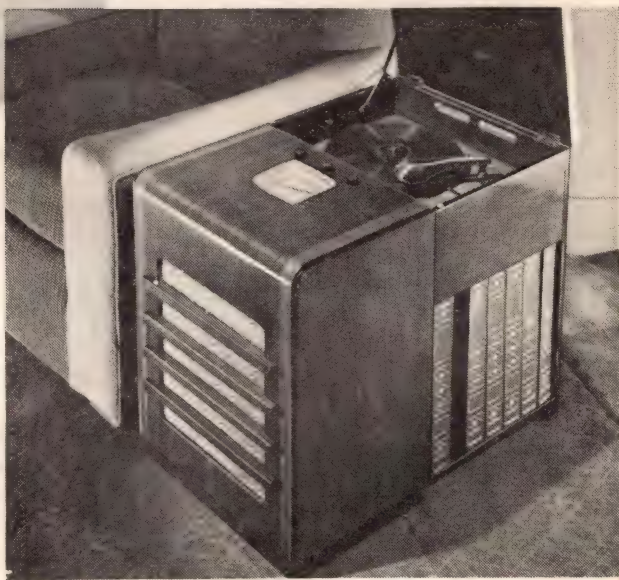
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Lawrence Gilman summed up the truth about him when he said that "Mahler's dreams were greater than himself." Perhaps his hypersensitive nature had much to do with his inability to sound the universal note that marks the true Titan in music. He recognized great music, knew and admired much of it, and yet when he came to compose himself he could not apply to himself the criticism that he could to others. In an article in our April issue, contributed by the conductor-composer, Klaus Pringsheim, a friend and pupil of Mahler's, the pertinent statement was made that "he was a personality of extreme contrasts; and his creative work was the expression of his personality."

Tragedy played a leading role in Mahler's life, and it was when he sounded the tragic note in music that he created his finest works. *Das Lied von der Erde* is just such a score, by many considered the composer's most imposing one. Other works of this kind are his *Fifth Symphony*, regarded by many as his best; and his *Kindertotenlieder*, a song-cycle for baritone voice and orchestra.

Das Lied von der Erde is a song-symphony in six movements, founded upon German versions of ancient Chinese poems, which Mahler altered to fit into his poetic pattern of a last farewell to the beauties of earth. This work came after his inflated *Eighth Symphony*, the "symphony of a thousand voices" as it has been called. Mahler had just learned that his heart was weak, and that his life was in danger. The thought apparently subdued him, for his *Das Lied von der Erde* was not created on grandiose proportions. In it he sought to express his spiritual belief in life, and in it he achieved a greatness which he had never really attained before.

The work is richly scored: Mahler was a brilliant and expressive orchestrator, and here the instrumentation is both arresting and stimulating. The orchestral color can satisfy apart from the words and the poetic sentiment of the composition.

This song-symphony opens with *The Drinking Song of Earth's Distress*, sung by the tenor. This deals with the praise of wine, with reflections on the brevity of human life. Next we have *The Solitary in Autumn*, sung by the contralto. This is followed by *Youth, Beauty*, and *The Drunkard in Spring*. All three of these songs are humorous in character; and the first two are set by Mahler in a quasi-oriental style. *Farewell* is the final and longest section, the heart of the

work. It is here that Mahler rises to imposing heights and stirs us deeply with his emotional intensity.

The recording of this work was accomplished during a performance and contains extraneous sounds which are, however, in no way disagreeable. As a matter of fact, they lend atmosphere to it. The reproduction is vivid and brilliantly realized.

Charles Kullman is particularly fine in the music allotted to him; he realizes his difficult and often thankless vocal lines in a highly commendable manner. Kerstin Thorborg, whom America heard for the first time last year, has a lovely voice which records well. She does not seem too certain of the rhythmic flow of the music in one or two places, which fault may or may not have been hers. But the beauty of her voice is irrefutable. Bruno Walter shapes the whole score with affectionate regard. His readings of Mahler are authoritative ones, since he was a close friend of the composer's. It was Walter, incidentally, who conducted the first performance of this work in Munich in 1911. This is surely a major recording release.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

MOUSSORGSKY: *Khowantchina—Introduction*; played by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, direction Serge Koussevitzky. Victor disc No. 14415, price \$2.00.

MOUSSORGSKY'S *Khowantchina* is less well known than his earlier opera, *Boris Godounov*, perhaps because Chaliapin has never sung the role of Dositheus in any major opera house in this country. The later opera has been presented here by various Russian opera companies, and has been praised by the public and press alike.

There is a great deal of fine music in *Khowantchina*, music of singular and beautiful effects. The *Prelude* has long been known and admired by phonophiles, since Sir Hamilton Harty recorded it several years ago for English Columbia. The music of the prelude presents a colorful picture of dawn over Moscow. This is no pastoral dawn, but a bright-hued, brilliant daybreak rising above the vari-colored domes and roofs of a Russian city at the end of the 17th century. It is one of the most remarkable musical pictures of its kind ever written.

Moussorgsky did not live to finish *Khowantchina*; it was Rimsky-Korsakow who revised and completed the score. Hence the heightened color of this music may be traced to the hand of Rimsky-Korsakow, who was one of the greatest orchestrators of all time.

Koussevitzky gives a splendid performance of this music, a performance more sharply outlined than Harty's. And the recording, of course, with its higher frequencies, is more revealing.

A re-recording of the moving processional music which divides the scenes in Act 4 should be made. It occupied the odd side of Stokowski's older recording of Stravinsky's *Fire Bird Suite*, but was unfortunately replaced by the conductor's transcription of a piano prelude by Shostakovich in the newer set. We have always resented this substitution, for the *Khowantchina* excerpt is music of poignant expressiveness, while that of Shostakovich-Stokowski is of no great consequence.

While on the subject of *Khowantchina*, it might be well to recommend several recordings. Albert Coates, whom Chaliapin has praised as the foremost conductor of Moussorgsky's music in the opera house, has made an excellent disc of the *Persian Dances* (Victor 11135). And the Russian contralto, Zelinskaya, has made a fine recording of *Martha's Divination* (Victor disc 4090), a mystic and uncanny invocation of the spirits of the underworld, which Moussorgsky has effectively realized in music. I believe these two latter recordings are still available. There is another of Shakhovitsky's aria, *The Streltsy are Sleeping*, listed in the *Victor Book of the Opera*, an aria of noble beauty, sung by the Russian basso Knijnikoff. This record and the one by Zelinskaya were made in China about six years ago by artists of a visiting Russian opera company. Despite their age, they are good operatic recordings. Knijnikoff's record is not as desirable as Zelinskaya's, however, because his voice is not as fine as hers.

—P. H. R.

* * *

RESPIGHI: *The October Excursions*, from *Roman Festivals (Feste Romane)*; played by Milan Symphony Orchestra, direction Molajoli. Columbia disc No. 69017-D, price \$1.50.

THE late Ottorino Respighi wrote three symphonic poems, as a cycle of Roman impressions — *Fountains of Rome* (1917),

Pines of Rome (1924), and *Roman Festivals* (1928) — in which, he tells us, he "sought to reproduce by means of tone, impressions of certain aspects of the Eternal City". In the first of these he "endeavored to give expression to the sentiments and visions suggested to him by four of Rome's fountains, contemplated at the hour in which their character is most in harmony with the surrounding landscape." In the second, he said he "resorted to Nature as a point of departure in order to recall memories and visions"; in the third, *Feste Romane*, he sought to present "visions and evocations of Roman fetes."

Like the first two symphonic poems, *Feste Romane* is divided into four sections, played without pauses. These four sections are *The Circus Maximus*, *The Jubilee*, *The October Excursions*, and *Epiphany*.

The October Excursions, according to the composer, is based on the following program:

"Fetes of October, in the castles engarlanded with vine-leaves — echoes of the hunt — tinklings of horse-bells — songs of love. Then, in the balmy evening, the sound of a romantic serenade."

This number, like its predecessors, is brilliantly scored, and shows the composer as an ingenious tonal painter rather than as a distinctive melodist. *The October Excursions* is the only section of the *Feste Romane* recorded. It is excellently set forth by the Milan Symphony, which in reality is the La Scala Orchestra assembled for symphonic recordings, and well recorded.

—P. G.

* * *

WEBER: *Oberon Overture*; played by Boston "Pops" Orchestra, direction Arthur Fiedler. Victor disc, No. 12043, price \$1.50.

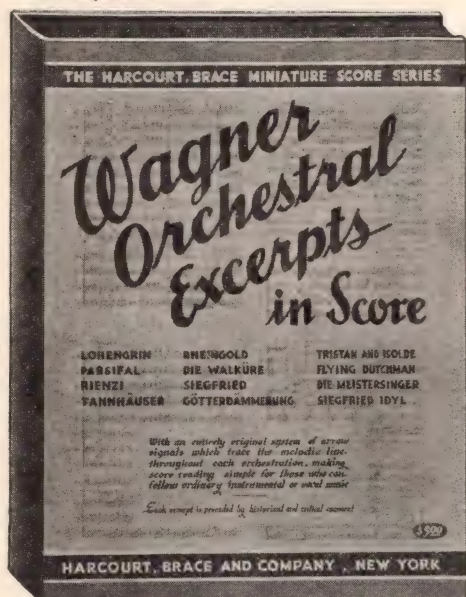
FIEDLER does not seem to be able to penetrate to the core of Weber's romanticism. He conducts here with a verve and energy more appropriate to a modern overture. He paces this music considerably faster than we usually hear it, and the speed largely accounts for the lack of feeling. The music is set forth in a straightforward manner—an honest reading undoubtedly, but not one that realizes the intentions of the tonal poet.

Comparison with Mengelberg's version of the overture on records, which is spaced on three sides, tends to make us believe that

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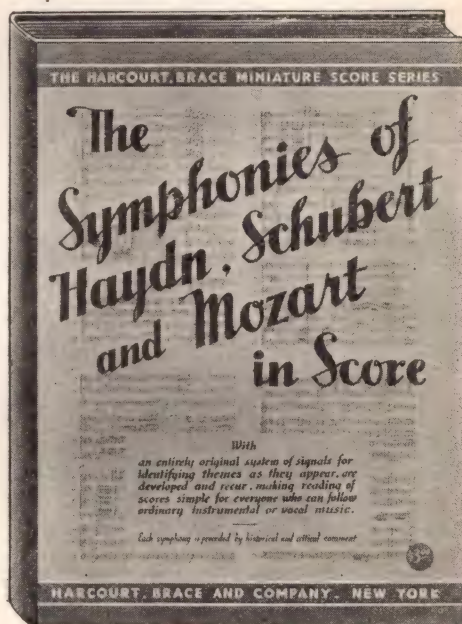


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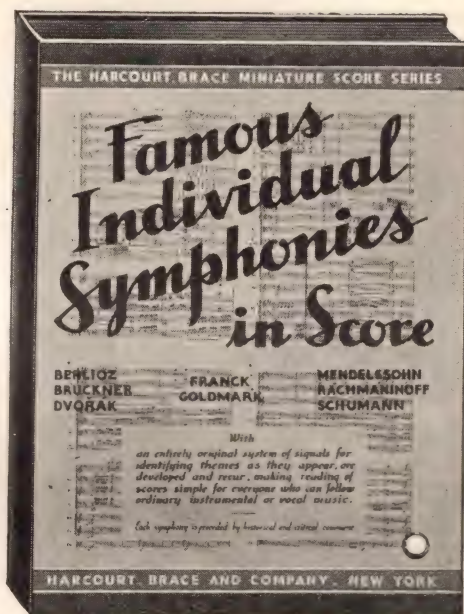
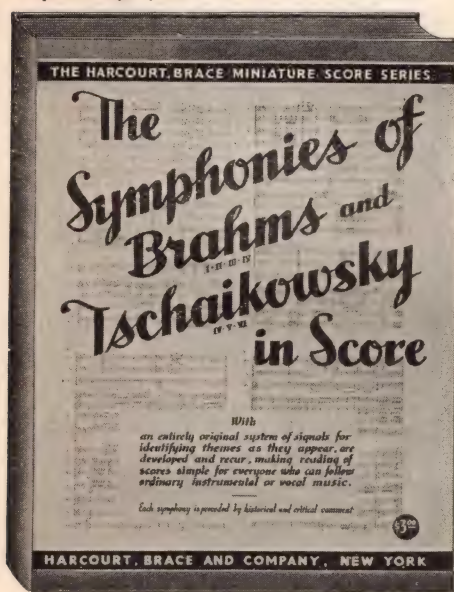
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The specimen page, naturally greatly reduced in size, printed on the left is the first page of the slow movement in the second of Beethoven's symphonies. You will note that the word "Exposition" is placed at the top of the score over the flute staff; all form divisions such as *Introduction*, *Exposition*, *Development*, *Recapitulation*, *Coda*, etc., are printed in their proper places all through the entire movement. You will also note that the words "Principal Theme—Part I" are printed at the bottom of the score underneath the 'cello and double-bass staff, and that a wavy black line indicates the length of this Principal Theme: all themes are indicated as they appear and recur in this way. Now observe the black arrow over the 1st Violin staff. This indicates that the principal melodic line lies in the violin for eight measures; then the arrow shifts to the clarinet staff, indicating that the principal melodic line has moved to the clarinet where it remains for eight measures, then moves back to the 1st Violin staff in the last measure shown on the specimen page. This brief explanation, carefully followed in connection with the specimen page, will make it clear that, merely by observing the arrow in its flight from staff to staff, anyone can really follow the entire score.

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Fiedler shares neither the admiration nor the regard for this music that the Dutchman owns. The lovely *adagio* opening is expressively set forth by Mengelberg, not so by Fiedler. And the subsequent *Allegro con fuoco*, which forms the main body of the overture, is taken much too fast by Fiedler. Mengelberg is not misled, as Fiedler seemingly is, by the *con fuoco* marking, which is indicative of spirit rather than tempo.

As a recording, this, like all of the Boston "Pops," is a marvelous reproduction of a modern symphony orchestra. But it does not surpass Mengelberg's in reproduction by such a wide mark that it justifies the replacement of the Dutchman's finer reading of the overture.

—P. G.

CONCERTOS

DALL'ABACO: *Concerto in B Flat Major*; played by Edwin Fischer's Chamber Orchestra. Victor 14418, price \$2.00.

THIS is, according to available information, our first recording of a work by Evaristo Felice Dall'Abaco, one of the early composers of the Bolognese school. Abaco was born in Verona in 1675, and died in Bavaria in 1742, and is thus a contemporary of Bach and Handel. He was called to Bavaria in 1701 by the Elector Max Emanuel. After the Battle of Blenheim he accompanied the court to Brussels, and upon the restoration of the government in 1715, he was appointed Konzertmeister.

He was one of the great instrumental composers in an age of transition, and musical historians frequently link his name with Corelli, Torelli, Vivaldi, Galuppi, and Sammartini.

The *Denkmaeler deutscher Tonkunst* contains his *Sonate da camera per violino e violoncello* (Op. 1 and 4), *Concerti a quattro da chiesa* (Op. 2), *Sonate a tre* (Op. 3), and *Concerti a piu stromenti* (Op. 5 and 6), all these probably written between the years 1706 and 1730.

This disc carries one of the church concertos, and well shows Abaco's knowledge of strings. The work consists of four brief movements. The opening *Largo Andante* begins with a fanfare; the *Allegro e Spiccato* is a spirited fugue; the third section is a broad

and stately *Largo*; the concluding lively *Allegro e Spiccato* is in triple rhythms.

The score calls for four string parts and a basso continuo, but in the recording, contrary to the present practice of playing such old music with the bass realized, the harpsichord or piano is left out. This omission is particularly evident in the *Largo* section, but throughout, the harmonies are complete. The label carelessly errs in stating that the performance is by "Edwin Fischer and his Chamber Orchestra, piano and orchestra," and also in the spelling of Fischer's name, since this is in all probability the great pianist Fischer.

The strings play with sensitivity and with great dynamic shading. Fischer, presumably, is conducting.

—A. P. D.

* * * *

TSCHAIKOWSKY: *Violin Concerto in D major*, Opus 35; played by Jascha Heifetz and the London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction of John Barbirolli. Victor set M-356, four discs, price \$8.00.

TSCHAIKOWSKY'S *Violin Concerto* was written just after his *Francesca di Rimini* and his *Fourth Symphony*, although its opus number precedes that of the symphony. Its creation was accomplished in less than two months: begun early in March, 1878, the orchestration was completed at the end of April. Originally Tchaikowsky dedicated the work to Leopold Auer, but Auer did not admire the concerto and excused himself from playing it, so the composer changed the dedication to Adolf Brodsky, who played the work for the first time in a concert in Vienna. The public of that city were not friendly to the composition, and Hanslick, the leading critic of his day, bitterly criticized it, finding the work more pleasing to the performer than to the listener.

Despite its shortcomings—which are many, for the work is full of difficult acrobatics, which convey nothing except the technical ability of the player, and also of unabashed sentimentality, which is apt to pall in repetition—the concerto today is one of the most popular of all with concert goers.

Tchaikowsky's *Violin Concerto* has been recorded twice before in its entirety—by Hubermann and Elman. Considerable controversy has raged over the relative

merits of these two performances. Personally, I have always thought Hubermann's performance far above Elman's in every respect. Now we have Heifetz's. There is no doubt in my mind that Heifetz's performance is the best of the work extant on records, not because it is a newer and better recording, but because Heifetz, as a violinist, is endowed with gifts that neither of the other violinists owns.

I have always wished that the *moderato* were not tacked to the *allegro* marking at the beginning of the concerto. Much of this music would benefit considerably by a slight increase in speed, particularly the sentimental second subject (last part of first record side, and so on). But I daresay that the soloist might complain that at a faster pace the technical difficulties of the movement would be prohibitive. Heifetz's suavity of tone in the showy passages adds to their enjoyment; his tone is pure, silken, and yet splendidly alive, not lush like Elman's.

As fine as Heifetz's performance of this work is, it cannot be said that he conveys all of its essentially Slavic characteristics. Of the three violinists, only Hubermann has sustained the Slavic note of the music. Heifetz's patrician musicianship is more universal in its enunciation of the spirit of the work; this has its definite compensations, for neither the fervor nor the sentiment of the music is allowed to dominate at any given point. His last movement lacks the fire and brilliance of Hubermann's, and he plays it at a slightly slower pace, but his first and second movements are more nobly and hence more treasurably performed.

Barbirolli is an excellent accompanist-conductor; he keeps the violinist in the center of the picture, and does not over-exploit the orchestral flourishes at any time. The recording is excellent in every way, particularly in its exploitation of "highs."

—P. H. R.

* * *

HAYDN: *Concerto in F Major for Harpsichord and Orchestra*; played by Mme. Roesgen-Champion and an orchestra conducted by Piero Coppola. Victor 12042, price \$1.50.


THIS *F Major Concerto* is seldom heard in public, and Haydn's biographers and critics pass over it with a bare mention.

Though it is not a particularly outstanding work, and has little of the familiar Haydn sparkle, it is thoroughly enjoyable when heard in a quiet and not too critical mood. The work was first published in Paris in 1771. It has only three short movements—an *Allegro moderato*, an *Andante*, and a *Presto* that comes to a surprising abrupt end.

The performance gives us a good conception of the tonal quality of the light eighteenth century orchestra with harpsichord. The solo instrument figures prominently, but is not exploited for any display. Mme. Marguerite Roesgen-Champion, distinguished composer, claveciniste, and editor of many old classics, plays with polished exactitude and restraint, on an instrument notable for its wiry sweetness rather than richness in registers.

Coppola's orchestra is keyed down to a nice balance with the delicate harpsichord. The recording, of only moderate volume, is suited to this type of music.

—A. P. D.

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THE music of Johann Christian Bach, the youngest son of Johann Sebastian and Anna Magdalena, born in 1735, is closer in spirit to Haydn and Mozart, his contemporaries, than to his notable sire. Some writers contend that it was Johann Christian and not his brother, Carl Philipp Emanuel, who effected the transition from his father and Handel to Haydn and Mozart. The latter, born twenty-one years after the younger Bach, was, as a matter of fact, much attracted to his music.

Johann Christian wrote prolifically in all forms. Like a great many composers of his time, he composed, however, largely to order and for pecuniary gain. He has been labeled a mercenary composer and a superficial genius, which epithets are not fully justified, as Mr. Kozlenko pointed out in his article on the composer (October issue, 1935—A. M. L.).

A contemporary critic of Johann Christian's, Charles Burney, stated that he "seems to have been the first composer who observed the law of *contrast*, as a *principle* . . . Bach in his symphonies and other instrumental pieces, as well as his songs, seldom failed, after a rapid and noisy passage to introduce one that was slow and soothing"; and "richness and variety of accompaniment, are certainly Bach's most prominent features."

This quartet is not on a level with Bach's symphonies. It is pleasant music, serene in spirit and graceful in construction. The contrast that Burney talks about is not strikingly in evidence. It is a representative work of its period, music, we might say, written to please the artistocrats of Bach's day. Its well-ordered flow is reflective of the polite manners of the period. It is divided into two movements, an *allegro con spirito* and a *minuetto*.

The performance of this music is creditably accomplished by a musical group who specialize in the playing of old music, via the radio. The players have fully sensed the composer's meaning, and the recorders have done notable justice to the musicians. The group is composed of Wittgenstein, flute; Neidell,

violin; Witz, viola; and Bilstin, cello. Mr. Wittgenstein's tonal delivery, which is consistently satisfying, deserves special commendation.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

MOZART: *Sonata in E minor*, for violin and piano, K. 304; played by Joseph Szigeti, violin, and Nikita Magaloff, piano. Columbia 12-inch disc No. 69005-D, price \$1.50.

AS if in answer to a prayer fervently breathed in a recent issue of this magazine, we are now offered one of Mozart's finest violin sonatas, hitherto unavailable on records. This work, written in 1778 during an unhappy stay in Paris, is conceived throughout in a mood of unrelenting melancholy and passionate protest. The prevailing tragic atmosphere is lightened only once — in the exquisite trio of the second movement.

The sonata is beautifully performed by Szigeti and his expert pianist. The recording is excellent, the proper balance between the two instruments being carefully observed. There is only one criticism that may be directed against the performance, and it is a very slight one. Why does Mr. Magaloff, in the *Tempo di Menuetto*, several times play the second of two tied notes of equal pitch?

—N. B.

* * * *

MENDELSSOHN: *String Quartet No. 3 in D major*, Opus 44, No. 1; played by Stradivarius String Quartet. Columbia set No. 304, three discs, price \$5.00.

MENDELSSOHN does not touch the innermost soul, for he did not seek to probe the secret depths that Beethoven did, nor did he know the anguish which makes men so often address themselves to the soul of others. But Mendelssohn has a grace and charm, a refinement and polish, and a perfection of form which deserve to be admired. Mendelssohn's music is full of sun and light, but its shading lacks depths. Perhaps if he had been poor and less respectable, as one writer has said, he might have accomplished greater things.

His string quartets are most agreeable in their melody and generally meticulously worked out in form. In fact, their perfection as regards technique of composition and form has placed them among the best of the quartet literature. Mendelssohn wrote six quartets in all, of which this is the fifth. Although numbered Opus 44, No. 1, the D

major Quartet was the last composed of the group that makes us Opus 44. Mendelssohn is particularly inspired in his opening movement; here, his themes are well contrasted and well worked out. The movement is not an easy one to play because of its orchestral proportions. The minuet which follows is transparency itself, delicately melodious. And the slow movement is a true "song without words". The finale is gay and happily carefree. Though the hand of a mature artist is apparent in this work, it is not an artist troubled by life, and although the material has distinction, it nevertheless lacks import.

The performance of this work by the Stradivarius Quartet is on the whole felicitously realized, although one wishes that more attention had been given to fine points of dynamic shading. Mechanically regarded, the set is admirable.

—P. H. R.

* * * * *

MOZART: *Trio No. 7, in G major*, K. 564; played by Mme. Walter Lang, piano; Walter Kägi, violin; and Franz Hindermann, cello. Columbia Set X-81, two discs, price \$3.00.

THIS beguiling little work started life as a piano sonata. The other two instruments were added later. Evidence of the *Trio's* source remains in the predominance of the piano part. The cheerful *Allegro*, the songful theme and variations of the *Andante*, and the gay *Rondo* form a composition that is not top-flight Mozart, but wholly charming nevertheless.

The *Trio* offers no insuperable problems to the players, and the performance is rightly kept within the rather small frame of the work. The odd side presents the *Andante* from the *E major Trio*, K. 542. Reproduction here is satisfactory.

—N. B.

VIOLIN

SZYMANOWSKI: *Notturmo*, and *Tarantella*, Opus 28, Nos. 1 and 2; played by Yehudi Menuhin accompanied by Marcel Gazelle. Victor disc No. 14383, price \$2.00.

SZYMANOWSKI, who died this past year at the age of fifty-four, was considered by his countrymen a musician of the true Polish tradition. For the last decade of his life Poland regarded him as the leader of a Polish renaissance. As a composer he was inclined towards elaboration and fastidious design. In his earlier compositions he paid

tribute to both Chopin and Scriabin; and later he wrote both atonally and polytonally.

He was the composer of a large group of small pieces which have been praised for their poetic grace and exquisite charm; among these pieces are such works as his *Fountain of Arethusa*, Opus 30, No. 1, and the present *Nocturne*. In both these compositions poetic grace is the accentuating note, and both are built upon langorous and sensuous melodies. There is in these attractive pieces for violin and piano an oriental note similar to that which we find in much of the music of Rimsky-Korsakow and Borodin.

The *Tarantella*, a dance of Italian origin, is in mood closer to the barbarism of the Cossack than to the abandon of the Italian. Both this piece and its companion are skillfully patterned, interesting examples of their composer's scrupulous craftsmanship in smaller forms. Although this cannot be termed music of great import, it is nonetheless worth hearing.

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When we say that these works are difficult ones, and that Menuhin plays them with ease and polish, no other praise is necessary, except to add that Marcel Gazelle is a worthy partner. Recording is well balanced and entirely satisfactory.

—P. H. R.

KEYBOARD

CHOPIN: *Impromptu in F sharp major*, Op. 36, and *Nocturne in E flat major*, Opus 55, No. 2; played by Ignaz Friedman. Columbia disc No. 69018-D, price \$1.50.

FRIEDMAN, a Pole, has a genuine feeling for one of the greatest of all Polish composers. His set of the *Mazurkas* is a worthy contribution to the phonograph.

Huneker finds the second *Impromptu in F sharp major* "of more moment than the other three." "There is something sphinx-like in this work," he says. "Its nocturnal beginning with the carillon bass — the sunken bell! — the sweet grave close of the episode, the faint hoofbeats of an approaching cavalcade, with the swelling thunder of its passage, surely suggest a narrative, a program."

Friedman plays the opening section with eloquent lyricism, and later sustains the brilliance of the middle section in the return to the opening mood.

The *E flat Nocturne*, Opus 55, No. 2, is presented here for the first time in a recording. It is improvisatory in character. Friedman plays it with genuine feeling. The recording of both compositions has been satisfactorily accomplished.

Two previous recordings of the *F sharp Impromptu* exist, one by De Pachmann and one by Cortot. The modern recording of Friedman's version makes honest comparison quite impossible, for the finer tone and greater dynamic range of piano reproduction today reveals more nuance in the case of Friedman.

—P. G.

* * * *

MOZART: *Fantasia in F minor*, K. 608; played by G. D. Cunningham (organ). Columbia disc No. 69009-D, price \$1.50.

COLUMBIA is to be commended for releasing a recording of this rarely-heard

work. Although it was written for a mechanism in a clock, it is a composition of deep feeling and of extremely interesting structure. After a majestic introduction (*allegro*), a splendid fugue in four voices is begun and worked out until a series of masterly modulations, using the thematic material of the introduction, leads to a grave and lovely *Andante* in A flat major. The *allegro* returns, but at the point where the fugue began in the first part of the work, we now hear only its subject, part of which forms the basis of further development, after which the piece ends with a short coda. It is amazing — and typical of Mozart — that he should lavish material and construction of this calibre on music intended for a machine. The work was written in 1791; it is a worthy example of its composer's style in the last years of his short life.

The performance is only fair. The phrasing is tasteful and the contrapuntal complexities of the fugue are clearly presented, but the rhythmic pulse is sometimes unsteady and some of the rapid ornamental figures are blurred. There are unfortunate cuts — a short and a long one in the *Andante*, and a longish one near the end. The recording is, on the whole, good.

—N. B.

* * * *

RAVEL: *Ondine*; and DEBUSSY: *Poissons d'Or*; played by Walter Gieseking. Columbia disc No. 69020-D, price \$1.50.

RAVEL'S *Ondine* recalls his *Jeux d'eau*. It is based on a poem by Aloyius Bertrand, from which the following extracts are taken:

"Listen! Listen! It is I Ondine who touches lightly with these water drops the panes of the windows, lighted by the pale rays of the moon.

"Listen! Listen! My father strikes the water with a branch of green reed, and my sisters caress with their foamy arms the islands of cool grass, water lilies and iris, or mock the lowly willows which seek to fish them from the deep.

"Her murmured song entreats me to take her betrothal ring upon my finger, to be the lover of Ondine, to visit with her in her palace, to be the king of the Lakes. When I replied that I loved a mortal, pouting and vexed, she wept bitter tears, uttered a scream, fainted and trickled in white drops along my bluish window pane."

Here we have a pianistic representation of the familiar Lorelei theme, which so many composers have perpetuated in song. The music is atmospheric and exquisitely poetic.

Poissons d'Or (Goldfishes) belongs to Debussy's second set of *Images* for piano. It is a luminous and sparkling composition in which the imagery is more dreamily than realistically set forth. Cortot suggests that this composition may have been inspired by the Oriental embroidery that Debussy was so fond of, "where the wild leaps of a water faun are represented in a rich fantastic handiwork of silk and gold."

Myra Hess and Ricardo Vines have both previously recorded *Poissons d'Or*. A comparison between the Hess and Gieseeking versions cannot be fairly made, however, for both artists are justly famed for their playing of the piano music of Debussy. With the advantage of modern recording, which gives to us subtle gradations of tone never previously heard from a record, Gieseeking's version naturally is the most desirable. The flow of the music under his agile fingers is accomplished with rare artistry. The reproduction here is rich and full.

—P. H. R.

BACH: *Hoert doch! Der sanften Floeten Chor*; and *Schafe koennen sicher weiden*; sung by Ria Ginster, with flutes, and piano accompaniments by Gerald Moore. Victor 14385, price \$2.00.

BACH'S secular cantatas are well represented in this month's Victor list, for in addition to the *Peasant Cantata* we find these two excerpts. *Hoert doch* is from *Cantata* 206, *Schleicht, spielende Wellen* is from a birthday offering for Augustus III, in 1734. Picander's text represents the various rivers of Saxony and Poland uniting to praise their sovereign. Pleisse, a soprano, in the aria from *Cantata* 206, sings: "Hear the melodious chorus of the flutes; they bring joy to the heart and charm the ear; their weaving harmonies express but one thought; let us, like them, agree."

Bach was not kind in writing this quartet for voice and three flutes, for each of the four voices has to cope with almost insuperable difficulties of breathing. Mme. Ginster and her three flutists (not named on the label) achieve an admirable success in allowing the music to flow reasonably

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freely. Hedwig von Debicka and her associates labored without such good result on the old Brunswick disc that was much admired in its day.

Schafe koennen sicher weiden is a "gem of purest ray serene." It comes from the cantata *Was mir behagt*, No. 208, written in Bach's early Weimar period, 1716, to be sung in a hunting lodge to celebrate the birthday of Duke Christian of Saxe-Weissenfels. Pales, a soprano, in the recorded aria, sings: "Happy flock of sheep, wandering in safety while the shepherd keeps watch. If our sovereign will rule wisely, peace and plenty will always flow, and the land will reap its reward." The music, with the cool voice blended with the flutes, has a pastoral quality, with the peace that we find elsewhere so often in Bach's religious writing.

Mme. Ginster, as a recording artist, does miracles with an obviously mediocre voice. An impeccable sense of style, coupled with authority in delivery, makes each choice aria and song that she sings an unforgettable work of art. May she continue to make many more discs of the type she has favored us with of late.

Her admirable piano accompanist is, as usual, Gerald Moore.

This record is strongly recommended to the numerous collectors who have found continuous pleasure in Elisabeth Schumann's recording of *Es ist vollbracht* and the *Aus Liebe will mein Heiland sterben* from the *St. Matthew Passion*.

—A. P. D.

BACH: *Coffee Cantata* (*Cantata* No. 211) (7 sides); performed by William Hain, tenor; Ethel Hayden, soprano; Benjamin De Loache, baritone; and Instrumental Ensemble directed from the harpsichord by Ernst Victor Wolff. *Erbauliche Gedanken eines Tabakrauchers* (*Tobacco Song*) (1 side), sung by Benjamin De Loache. Musicraft set No. 5, price \$6.00.

TWO secular cantatas by Bach in one month present an interesting side of the great composer that is not widely known. The origin of the *Coffee Cantata*, unlike that of the *Peasant Cantata*, is not known. Conjectures have been made that it was composed for some domestic occasion in Bach's own household. Most of his other secular can-

tatas were written for various festivities or functions in honor of royal or aristocratic patrons.

The most interesting aspect of the two secular cantatas issued this month by different companies is the fact that despite their absurd and inconsequential librettos, they prove that their composer was deeply sincere at all times when writing music. It has been said that Bach's secular cantatas do not illustrate any special phase of his development. This is undoubtedly true, but they do attest his inventive spontaneity and prove that he was capable of expressing light-hearted merriment. Too, they show us that he must have been a student of folk music. Terry holds that the greater portion of the secular cantatas "is not conspicuously different in style" from his sacred music; it would have been virtually impossible for Bach to have been musically superficial at any time.

The *Coffee Cantata* concerns itself with the growing liking for coffee, a novelty at the time the work was written in Germany, and a beverage which many people thought injurious to health. Schlendrian, in the cantata, disapproves of his daughter, Lieschen's, taste for coffee and determines to break her of it. His many efforts meet with no success until he threatens not to let her have a husband unless she gives it up. She agrees to give up the beverage if her father will get her a husband, and then turns the tables by causing it to be known that no suitor will be acceptable unless he agrees that she can have her coffee.

It will be seen that the story is a slender one. The music however is delightful in its characterization. But it is repetitious in spots and in my estimation the recording of the work would have gained with judicious pruning.

Of the three singers who participate in the recording, William Hain, the tenor, does the most notable work. His clear, attractive tenor voice is distinguished for its fine legato, and his diction is most admirable. Hain is an established Bach singer, and has been widely praised for his performance in the *B minor Mass* and the *Passions*.

Ethel Hayden possesses a lovely soprano, and her legato is wholly admirable; but her diction leaves much to be desired.

De Loache, in my estimation, is not well cast as Schlendrian. The part really calls for a bass. He sacrifices tonal flow to diction.

It is a curious thing, but only in the purely coloratura passages of the music does he achieve a genuine legato. This is unfortunate, because the music calls for definitely "smooth and connected" singing. His rendition of the aria, *Hat man nicht mit seinen Kindern*, lacks true distinction; and the famous air, *Mädchen, die von harten Sinnen*, cannot be termed an outstanding performance, nor can his singing of the *Tobacco Song* from Anna Magdalena's *Notebook*.

Considered on the whole, however, the performance is more than satisfactorily realized, for all three of the singers are good musicians. In my estimation, one of the best features of the set is the direction of Wolff, who holds the double job of conductor and harpsichordist. The recording is, on the whole, good; and the record surfaces are consistently smooth.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

BACH: *The Peasant Cantata*; performed by Jeanne Guyla, soprano, Martial Sigher, baritone, G. Crunelle, flutist, with chamber orchestra conducted by Gustave Bret. Victor set M-360, two discs, price \$4.50.

M. GUSTAVE BRET here conducts the abridged version of the *Peasant Cantata* that he arranged for a performance by Bach Society of Paris. His cuts do not interfere with the continuity of the piece, for the work is but loosely strung together. The instrumentation is simple: strings, flute, and horn, with a piano instead of a harpsichord for the accompaniments to the recitatives.

Bach wrote this cantata to honor his friend, Karl Heinrich von Dieskau, when the latter entered the ranks of manorial lords. Picander's original Saxon dialect libretto is here sung in a French translation. The protagonists, a peasant couple, are given homely dialogue in lyrics suited to their station and to the event they are celebrating. They are concerned with their daily food and drink, their love-making, and each day for itself, philosophy, loyalty to the new lord and mistress, hope for a good harvest and abundant prosperity, and faith enough to celebrate fortune in advance.

Bach entered merrily into the spirit of the occasion, and gave his peasants joyous, care-free music, full of the tang of the earth and of the humor of happy living. And in

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(Continued on Page 231)

this exuberant spirit our Parisian artists perform it. Jeanne Guyla sings in sprightly fashion, with a voice that has the nasal, but not unpleasant, quality characteristic of French sopranos. A much superior vocalist and stylist, however, is the baritone, Martial Singher, from the Opera, whose singing is a constant delight. G. Crunelle, flute soloist of the Padeloup Orchestra, assists M. Bret's chamber orchestra.

Mr. Reed's leaflet, which accompanies the set, gives full information about the occasion that called forth the cantata, and summarizes the dialogue so clearly that we can dispense with a score in following the two records.

—A. P. D.

* * * *

BIZET: *Carmen*, *Habanera*, and *Seguidilla*; sung by Gladys Swarthout. Victor disc No. 14419, price \$2.00.

MISS SWARTHOUT sings Bizet's highly subtle music with little feeling of nuance. It takes a great interpreter and a great vocalist to do justice to the role of Carmen. To sing these arias "straight," as Miss Swarthout does, is to convey neither the meaning nor the quality of the music. Furthermore, for a singer to over-indulge in sliding and scooping, as the present one does, is to exhibit not only bad singing but also bad taste.

One can turn to a half dozen versions of these arias on existent records, such as those made by D'Alvarez, Supervia, Perelli, Visconti and Besanzoni, any one of which is an infinitely better performance. The greatest recording of the *Habanera*, is, in our estimation, the acoustical one that Jeanne Gerville-Reache made. No one has ever conveyed the subtlety of the music as she did—her second verse is truly unforgettable for its vocal nuances. Perhaps the most satisfying recording of the *Seguidilla* remains that of Geraldine Farrar. When Miss Farrar sings such lines as, "Mais ils ne sont pas à mon gré," and "Je pense à certain officier," those lines mean something—they convey the intensity and cleverness of the gypsy girl, Carmen. When Miss Swarthout sings these lines, one has the feeling that an American girl is simply singing lines which mean nothing at all to her, even though her French sounds well.

When singers of Bruna Castagna's type are available, it seems a pity to issue recordings like these.

—P. G.

Twelve Beloved American Songs; sung by Nelson Eddy, with piano accompaniment by Theodore Paxson and orchestra accompaniment conducted by Nathaniel Shilkret. Victor, Musical Masterpiece Series Album C-27, price \$6.50.

VICTOR has persuaded that hero of the movie and radio fans, Nelson Eddy, to record a whole album of his most popular encore songs. The "twelve beloved American songs" turn out to be *Trees*, *By the Waters of Minnetonka*, *Smilin' Through*, *A Dream*, *Sylvia*, *Thy Beaming Eyes*, *A Perfect Day*, *At Dawning*, *Oh Promise Me*, *The Rosary*, *The Hills of Home* and *Deep River*. Would that the blight on old chestnuts had not stopped short of these!

Mr. Eddy's fine baritone voice and clear diction never desert him, and to his credit, let it be said, he can raise the better songs of the bunch, *Thy Beaming Eyes*, *Oh Promise Me*, and *Deep River*, far above the general low level. But it cannot be honestly said that his heart at all times is truly in his job. I daresay Mr. Eddy would have enjoyed singing an album of lieder or a collection of American art-songs—we have quite a group of these even if singers do not exploit them.

Theodore Paxson plays good accompaniments for two of the songs, but Nathaniel Shilkret's cheap orchestral accompaniments reek stiflingly of bad movie and radio studios. The recording is very full and powerful.

The handsome photo of Mr. Eddy, on the inside of the front cover of the album, will doubtlessly be widely admired.

—A. P. D.

EDUCATIONAL RECORDS

Frank Black, Musical Director of the National Broadcasting Company, has made for Victor a series of five discs containing twelve selections arranged for school orchestras by Bruno Reibold. The selections include Berlioz's *Marche Hongroise* and Humperdinck's *Dream Pantomime* from *Hänsel and Gretel* (Victor disc 25637); Grieg's *Triumphal March* from *Sigurd Jorsalfar* (Victor disc 25638); Bach's *Bourrée* from the *Second Violin Sonata* and Sullivan's *Entrance and March of the Peers* (Victor disc 25639); completion of the *March of the Peers* with Wagner's *Dance of the Apprentices* from *Die*

Meistersinger and Weber's *March Classique* and Verdi's *Moorish Slave Dance* from *Aida* (disc 25640); Elgar's *Salut d'Amour* and Ippolitov-Ivanov's *Procession of the Sardar* (disc 25641); and Rimsky-Korsakow's *Song of India* and Södermann's *Swedish March* (Victor disc 25642).

Never before, to our knowledge, has a conductor of Mr. Black's rank been invited to conduct a series of educational recordings. There is much to praise in these records, Black's firm yet resilient beat, his admirable singing tone and equally admirable phrasing. The arrangements are not pretentious nor do they do full justice to the music; they are simplified for student orchestras. Despite the limited scope of the music, Mr. Black succeeds in making each piece an expressive experience. We believe that they will prove fine incentives to a student body.

—P. H. R.

CORRESPONDENCE

On Turning the Needle

To the Editor of The American Music Lover:

I very much enjoyed the article criticizing the elaborate and inaccurate blurbs in the monthly record circulars. There have been far too many of these.

Regarding the B. C. N. Emerald needles about which I wrote to you recently, I want to tell you that turning the needle does the trick. I now get seven to eight playings without resharpening. Perhaps some of your other readers may be interested to know about this.

Sincerely yours,

J. W. BECKWITH

Glendora, Cal. September 23, 1937.

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SWING MUSIC NOTES

By ENZO ARCHETTI

THE promised Ellington concert at Carnegie Hall is not scheduled as yet. Of course, when these notes appear in print, most of the month of October will still be ahead. Anything can happen in that time, especially since all signs are propitious: Duke Ellington and his orchestra are in New York, the sponsor of the concert is ready and willing, the thousands of Ellington admirers are anxious. The concert will more than likely happen during November. All who are interested are advised to watch the papers and billboards in case it is announced earlier.

While Phil Cohen, the director of the *Saturday Night Swing Club*, is in Hollywood directing the affairs of Raymond Scott and his Quintet, the broadcasts continue under the able guidance of Ed Cashman. During the month of September the quality of the broadcasts improved considerably. A quite natural improvement, since the trend of swing musicians is again back to the cities and especially New York. More artists are now more easily available. One of the outstanding broadcasts featured Jimmy Dorsey, who has not been East with his orchestra for a long time. They played a week at Loew's State in New York and during a breathing spell between shows Jimmy and some of his band managed to take part in a *Saturday Night Swing Club* broadcast. We heard some fine blues clarinetting by Jimmy himself and some drumming by Ray McKinley which out-Krupa-ed Krupa but the impressive feature of the program was the singing of June Richmond, a young Negress from Chicago, discovered by Jimmy. Jimmy understood the quality of his find and presented her on the West Coast. She was an immediate hit with the public. And she proved it again at the State and the S. N. S. C. broadcast. Her style is characterized by an extraordinary vigor and sense of humor. Her stage presence is remarkably forward and immediately attracting. Her style of singing is thoroughly individual though it could be fairly accurately described as a combination of the best

in Ella Fitzgerald, Mildred Bailey, Bessie Smith, and Ethel Waters. Here is definitely a singer to be watched and encouraged. Jimmy has made an excellent discovery.

At the time of writing, Raymond Scott and his Quintet were still in Hollywood busy with their picture work. They have just completed a sequence for Eddie Cantor's new picture *Ali Baba* in which they play *Twilight in Turkey* in costume. They have also been signed to appear in *Nothing Sacred* during which they were to play *Minuet in Jazz* but it seems some difficulties have arisen about costuming and for the present that point is not settled. Shortly the Quintet will again take part in the S. N. S. C. broadcasts but they will be picked up in Hollywood and relayed to New York. This will be on or about the 23rd of the month when it is expected that Eddie Cantor will also assist in the broadcast and probably reintroduce the Quintet on the air.

On September 26th, Bunny Berigan and his Orchestra completed their series of broadcasts for the *Admiracion* program on WOR and Bunny has again taken to the road. On October 5th he will open the Arcadia Ballroom in New York and play for the inaugural week, after which he will take part in a *Magic Key* program on the air during October. After a tour of the theatres he will play the Palomar in Los Angeles toward the end of November or during the early part of December.

At present George Whetling, drummer par excellence in Bunny's band is on vacation. However, it is rumored that George may make the vacation from Bunny's band permanent. This would be a great loss for Bunny because George is the one solid swing man in the band who in any way approaches the quality of Bunny's playing; they are the two musicians who save the band from complete mediocrity. It has been said before in this column and I am saying it again: Bunny's band needs an overhauling and an injection of fresh swing blood—genuine swing, not the milk-and-water kind which

has to be whipped into a state of artificial swing by orchestrations or the inspired promptings of Bunny or Whetting. The name of Bunny Berigan has come to mean genuine, solid swing. Every man enlisted to serve in an orchestra for him should be of a calibre capable of supporting that reputation.

The new Victor album *Symposium of Swing* is an example of a grand idea gone wrong because of poor planning and poor judgment. It is known that these records were not all made at the same time to conform to any pre-conceived plan. They were made at various recording sessions when the respective orchestras were told to add a couple of choruses in order to fill out a twelve inch record. The results plainly show the effect of padding. The Benny Goodman is characterized by an excessive amount of solo drumming, of all things. It is far from the intentions of this writer to belittle the ability of Gene Krupa, but a good drummer should be felt and not heard. This record is almost another Joe Daniels Drumnastics stunt. The Tommy Dorsey and the Fats Waller are considerably better though they, too, show the effect of padding. The Bunny Berigan is probably the most exciting in the album but here again, especially in the *Prisoner's Song*, the orchestra goes completely haywire toward the end of the twelve inches. The mess is again the result of padding. Experience has proven that the ideas of jazz orchestrators seldom successfully stretch beyond a ten inch record side. In fact, most jazz themes cannot stand the extra strain. The number of twelve inch swing recordings in existence which could be considered good can be counted on the fingers of one hand and these *Symposium of Swing* discs are definitely *not* four of them.

Rumor has it that soon the Master record will pass out of the record world—a rumor that seems well justified by the fact that there have been no Master releases since July 27th. The recordings now in the Master "catalog" will be transferred either to Brunswick of Variety. Variety appears most likely to be the choice because of the popularity that brand has gained since its creation and because of the need for some big name orchestras to lend weight to the Variety catalog.

On September 20th, the *Daily News* published an article which is a classic of its kind: "Laboratory tests of the effect of swing music on emotions, with a youth and a

RECORD BUYERS' GUIDE

(Continued from Page 231)

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girl as the unsuspecting guinea pigs, were described yesterday by Arthur Cremin, director of the New York Schools of Music and leader in a drive for legislation to bar hot tempos. 'Swing music is very bad for the morals', said Cremin, who also is president of the American Creative League of Music Students, a violinist and author of piano text books for school work. 'It's far more harmful than obscene songs because it arouses the lust of the listeners before they realize it. We proved this by experiments. For example, we placed a young man and a girl in a room where we could watch them without being observed. It might have been a bit embarrassing if they had known, but it was all in the interests of science. First, we provided a program of good music, classical pieces and popular songs, such as waltzes. They were friendly, but that was all. Later, we arranged another meeting. This time the radio played swing music. They were much bolder, both of them. The boy took much more leeway in his actions, and the girl didn't object.'

"'You mean they necked?' he was asked.

"'Yes,' said the reformer sadly, 'I mean they necked'.

"Cremin, who hopes to put a bill through State Legislatures censoring orchestrations which 'tend to excite the sex emotions', believes swing music may have much to do with the recent wave of sex crimes."

Such an article and such observations are the height of something or other. I'll let readers decide what. I think I could be a pretty good mind reader right this minute!

The New York branch of the U. H. C. A. will resume activities with a jam session shortly—probably toward the end of the month . . . Tommy Dorsey opened at the Commodore Hotel on September 30th . . . On the first Sunday of every month, beginning this Fall, Chick Webb and his orchestra will feature battles of music with other orchestras at the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem. Watch for Chick's opening at the Savoy . . . Maxine Sullivan, the swell colored singer at the Onyx, is something to rave about. Listen to her Vocalion records for a sample . . . The Cotton Club in New York reopened on September 24th with Cab Calloway again leading the show . . . Bob Crosby will shortly be leaving town unless a certain radio commercial materializes . . . Sid Weiss is now with Artie Shaw's band . . . Benny Morton has left Don Redman's orchestra and joined

Count Basie . . . the Original Dixieland Jazz Band is opening at a ballroom on 14th Street in New York . . . a persistent rumor which can't be tracked down has it that another grand swing concert is being planned and will be aired at Madison Square Garden soon . . . a part of the Casa Loma Band will take part in the S.N.S.C. broadcast on October 16.

CORRESPONDENCE

On Bach Transcriptions

To the Editor of The American Music Lover:

Mr. Broder might have qualified his statement that "the voice and the organ were the most expressive media at Bach's command." He should have added: "for the particular type of music under consideration." He cites the *Toccata in D minor* and the *Passacaglia*. I quite agree that the organ was the most expressive medium for these works. But Bach could also be most expressive in writing music for the violin, oboe, etc., as witness certain slow movements of the sonatas, concertos (*Brandenburg* and otherwise) and certain arias with obligati in the choral works.

One other matter: Mr. Broder compares Schweitzer's interpretation of the *Toccata in D minor* with that of Stokowski, to the detriment of the former. I have always felt that this recording was the one weak spot in all of Schweitzer's recordings thus far issued. It would have been much fairer to have used Sittard's record for comparison. No one can deny that the *Toccata* is full of drama. Schweitzer's emotional constitution, being contemplative rather than dynamic, precludes the complete manifestation of the spirit of the *Toccata*.

Sincerely,

HENRY S. GERSTLE.

New York, N. Y. September 15th.

* * * *

Texts of Songs

To the Editor of The American Music Lover:

Giving the gist of the song words in the August issue was one of the best things that I have seen in any of the record magazines.

I enjoy the songs about 100 per cent more if I know at least something of what it is all about.

Many of us would appreciate more of the gist of songs that are recorded. The companies are very remiss in this.

Yours respectfully,

MORRILL J. MORRIS, M. D.

Seattle, Wash.

IN THE POPULAR VEIN

By HORACE VAN NORMAN

Standard Popular

AAAA—*Don't Save Your Love For A Rainy Day, and Ebb Tide.* Claude Thornhill and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7957.

A band of exceptional promise is revealed in this excellent record. Thornhill, long one of the top-flight pianists and presently a member of Kostelanetz's resplendent musical aggregation, apparently has a few ideas of his own regarding arrangement, tempo, etc., which have been accumulated during the years he has toiled for other bandsmen, and exposes a good many of them here in his first standard priced release. Aside from Thornhill's own exceedingly adroit piano work, which may be a trifle imitative of Teddy Wilson, but is of all orchestral piano work the type best adapted to recording, the outstanding feature of this disc is unquestionably the vocal on *Don't Save Your Love*, which happens to be by a young person named Maxine Sullivan, who is destined to go places and quickly. Appearing now at the Onyx Club, she is the fortunate possessor of one of the most completely effective and original vocal styles which it has been my fortune to encounter in many, many months. It combines a grand and infallible sense of swing with a haunting quality of voice which is unforgettable in a number of this kind, or in her and Thornhill's magnificent version of *Loch Lomond*. The two numbers here recorded are in as complete contrast to each other as they could possibly be, but Thornhill does a swell job on them both.

* * * *

AAA—*An Old Flame Never Dies, and If You Were Someone Else,* both from *Virginia*. Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra. Victor 25649.

Of the tunes which Arthur Schwartz has written for the current Center Theatre spectacle, *Virginia*, the most that can be said is that they fall upon the ear pleasantly and are put together in a craftsmanlike manner, which is undoubtedly quite enough for most people but isn't nearly enough for those of us who recall some of the grand things he has done in past seasons. If the numbers themselves are just a bit too refined for comfort, Dorsey does his best to make them vital and danceable, and with his usual success. To have Dorsey take the first chorus as a trombone solo seems to be becoming a formula on his discs but it somehow doesn't become monotonous. On the contrary, it seems always to get the recording off to a rousing start and what follows on the subsequent choruses never lets you down.

* * * *

AAA—*Remember Me, and Am I in Love?* Hal Kemp and his Orchestra. Victor 25633.

These are two Harry Warren tunes from the film *Mr. Dodds Takes the Air*, and both are of the com-

paratively high grade of writing that we can generally expect from this extremely talented Italian-American songsmith. Kemp nearly always does his best work in numbers that are a notch or so above the average; this case offers no exception to the rule. The inevitable fly in the ointment is the omnipresent Skinny Ennis, who (may God have mercy on his immortal soul), was, and remains, the very worst singer of vocal choruses in the whole wide world.

* * * *

AAA—*Have You Got Any Castles Baby?* and *You've Got Something There.* Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra. Victor 26635.

More Dorseyana of the very first water. Both tunes are from *Varsity Show*, and are products of that very grand song-writing team of Johnny Mercer and Dick Whiting. When a lyric writer and a tune writer possessing the wit and originality of these two get together, we have a right to expect genuinely superior popular songs and they don't disappoint us. Granting the utter triviality and unpretentiousness of the two tunes (what else could numbers from a little thing like *Varsity Show* be but trivial?) they at least are trivial in a thoroughly charming and intelligent manner, which is vastly to be preferred to the heavily sentimental, excruciatingly unintelligent type of number which we have always with us. In both the bubbling *Have You Got Any Castles* and the suave *You've Got Something There*, Dorsey is more than at home. In fact, in his arrangement on the latter side, it seems to us he does some of the most effective work (of a smooth, definitely non-swing type) he has ever given us.

* * * *

AA—*That Old Feeling, and Born to Love.* Jan Garber and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7935.

This record is allowed a place in these sacrosanct precincts on two counts: First, *That Old Feeling*, for wholly incomprehensible reasons, is one of the top numbers just now. Second, Garber, for equally incomprehensible reasons, is and has been for the past several years, or ever since he organized his band with the avowed intention of imitating Lom-

INDEX FOR VOLUME 2 OF THE AMERICAN MUSIC LOVER

An index for Volume 2 has been printed and is now ready for distribution. The price of the index, which is uniform in size to the magazine, is 25 cents a copy. (No index for Volume I has been printed. Insufficient interest prevented its compilation.)

bardo in every nuance of every measure that he played, one of the most popular bands of these United States. Whatever you and I may think of the insipid fare that he serves, it will always be Garber and the likes of him that turn out to be the real money makers, with all the tumult and the shouting for the Goodmans and the Ellingtons. And so, purely for the record, we give you Monsieur Garber's last and most characteristic opus.

HOT JAZZ

QAAA—*A Symposium of Swing*
Sing, Sing, Sing, Parts 1 and 2. Benny Goodman and his Orchestra:

Honeysuckle Rose, and *Blue, Turning Gray Over You*. Fats Waller and his Rhythm;

Stop, Look and Listen, and *Beale Street Blues*. Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra;

I Can't Get Started, and *The Prisoner's Song*. Bunny Berigan and his Orchestra. Victor Album C-28, price \$5.50.

It was inevitable that sooner or later someone would bring out an album of swing recordings bearing some such highfalutin title as *A Symposium of Swing*. Purely as a commercial proposition, we can testify from personal observation that the idea is a sound and a shrewd one. The principal fault to be found with the present collection is the unevenness in quality of the contents. At the top stands Goodman's contribution, *Sing, Sing, Sing*, which is one of the most completely extraordinary recordings ever made by Goodman or anyone else. In many ways, this disc is in a class quite by itself. In the first place, it is the largest swing recording ever made, running to two well-filled twelve-inch sides, or nearly ten minutes. It is, in effect, a concerto for percussion instruments and orchestra. Gene Krupa, the dynamo upon whom the Goodman band has always depended for its rhythmic vitality, plays the solo parts with his inconceivable brilliance of style, and the entire band plays as though possessed. The conception of the whole thing is much more like an orchestral work by Stravinsky or Prokofieff than it is a dance arrangement. By the way, through some monument of stupidity, the name of the master arranger who put this thing together is entirely omitted from both the label and the accompanying descriptive brochure. More than any other individual connected with this set does he deserve credit for its success. In the daring and mastery displayed in its musical content, this can be compared to nothing else in the entire category of swing recordings, except a few of Ellington's finest things.

The remainder of the set is bound to be something of a disappointment after this dazzling first record. The Waller disc is an effort to duplicate a typical "in-the-groove" jam session at a Fifty-second Street night spot, but it doesn't come off. The Dorsey disc is no worse and no better than his average. The Berigan *I Can't Get Started*, recorded here for the first time in its unabridged form and justly famed as his theme selection, reveals Berigan, for all his exhibitionism, as the ace trumpeter of them all, but *The Prisoner's Song*, on the reverse, is just another of those pointless swingings of a tune which, banal in the first place, can only result in a banal arrangement.

AA—*Heat Wave*, and *Chicken a-la-Swing*. Guitar duet by Carl Kress and Dick McDonough. Brunswick 2885.

* * * *

These two grand guitarists again combine their talents and the results are mildly pleasing, but little more. *Heat Wave* is a neat enough job, with quite a bit of the same sort of Spanish technique that characterized their *Danzon*, but the cleverest thing about the reverse side is its title.

* * * *

OTHER CURRENT POPULAR RELEASES

(The following are rated from quality of performance regardless of record quality.)

AAA—*Big Apple*, and *You Can't Stop Me From Dreaming*. Teddy Wilson and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7954.

AAA—*Red Cap*, and *I Found a New Baby*. Erskine Hawkins and his 'Bama State Collegians. Vocalion 3668.

AAA—*She's Tall, She's Tan, She's Terrific*, and *I'm Always In the Mood for You*. Cab Calloway and his Orchestra. Variety VA643.

AAA—*You Can't Stop Me from Dreaming*, and *Blossoms on Broadway*. Dick Robertson and his Orchestra. Decca 1415.

AAA—*Roses in December*, and *Yankee Doodle Band*. Mal Hallett and his Orchestra. Decca 1402

AAA—*Lach Lomond*, and *I'm Coming Virginia*. Maxine Sullivan and her Orchestra. Vocalion 3654.

AA—*Good-Bye, Jonah*, and *If You Were Someone Else*. Russ Morgan and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7955.

AA—*Make a Wish*, and *My Campfire Dreams*. Richard Himber and his Orchestra. Victor 25650

AA—*Let 'Er Go*, and *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*. Glen Gray and The Casa Loma Orchestra. Decca 1396.

AA—*The Lady Is a Tramp*, and *Little Fraternity Pin*. Henry King and his Orchestra. Decca 1404.

AA—*Why Talk About Love?* and *I'd Like to See Samoa of Samoa*. Clyde Lucas and his Orchestra. Variety VA 642.

AA—*Gangway*, and *Lord and Lady Whoozis*. Ambrose and his Orchestra. Decca 1406.

AA—*Coquette*, and *For Dancers Only*. Jimmie Lunceford and his Orchestra. Decca 1340.

A—*Is It Love or Infatuation?* and *Make a Wish*. Jan Garber and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7956.

A—*Dardanella*, and *Dinah*. Ray Block and his Orchestra. Variety VA607.

A—*You Can't Stop Me From Dreaming*, and *In a Little Carolina Town*. Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians. Victor 25656.

Our Radio Dial

(Eastern Standard Time)

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(Red Network)

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3:00 P.M.—Tapestry of Melody
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9:30 P.M.—American Album of Familiar Music

Mondays—

8:30 P.M.—Voice of Firestone
10:30 P.M.—Music for Moderns

Tuesdays—

5:00 P.M.—Benno Rabinoff, violinist
7:15 P.M.—Vocal Varieties

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6:15 P.M.—Carol Deis, soprano
7:45 P.M.—Jean Sablon, songs

Thursdays—

2:00 P.M.—NBC Music Guild

Fridays—

5:00 P.M.—Arthur Lang, baritone
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8:00 P.M.—Cities Service Concert
9:00 P.M.—Waltz Time

Saturdays—

6:35 P.M.—Alma Kitchell, contralto
9:00 P.M.—Spitalny and NBC Concert Hour

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8:00 P.M.—General Motors Concert

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8:15 P.M.—Fairchild & Carroll, piano duo

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Wednesdays—

9:00 P.M.—Frank Black and NBC-String Sym.

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8:15 P.M.—The Lieder Singers

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2:00 P.M.—NBC-Music Appreciation Hour
5:00 P.M.—Choir Symphonette

Saturdays—

8:30 P.M.—Fray & Braggioti, piano duo
9:00 P.M.—National Barn Dance
10:30 P.M.—Gems of Light Opera

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3:00 P.M.—Everybody's Music — Barlow and
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9:00 P.M.—Ford Sunday Hour

Tuesdays—

3:30 P.M.—Columbia Concert Hall
10:30 P.M.—Del Casino, tenor

Wednesdays—

4:00 P.M.—Curtis Institute of Music
8:30 P.M.—Deanna Durbin — Eddie Cantor
9:00 P.M.—Kostelanetz Orch. with Soloists

Thursdays—

6:00 P.M.—Del Casino, tenor
10:00 P.M.—Victor Bay's Concert Orch.

Fridays—

3:00 P.M.—Columbia Concert Hall
6:00 P.M.—Margaret Daum, soprano
8:00 P.M.—Hammerstein's Music Hall
10:00 P.M.—Kitty Carlisle, soprano and Reed
Kennedy, baritone

Saturdays—

11:00 A.M.—Cincinnati Cons. of Music
6:00 P.M.—Columbia Concert Hall
7:00 P.M.—Swing Session
7:30 P.M.—Carborundum Band (from Oct. 16)

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